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Art. I. *An Essay on the Equity of Divine Government, and the Sovereignty of Divine Grace.* By Edward Williams, D.D. 8vo. pp. 502.

(Concluded from page 51. of our January Number.)

THE fifth Chapter of this valuable work, is distributed into three sections; of which the first is, "Of Moral Government as it relates to the aspect and design of the Gospel." Here it is remarked, that we should carefully distinguish between the "actual boundaries of revealed truth, as existing among men, and the gracious aspect of it, according to a plan of moral Government." As, in the dispensations of divine Providence, there are many things which may be considered as universal blessings, of which the actual participation is limited; so, in the dispensations of divine mercy, the possession of privilege is partial, but its exhibition, general. Even in those economies which appear the most restricted, (as those relating to Abraham and his family, and to the Jews as a peculiar and distinct people,) there is nothing in the promise of acceptance exclusive: on the contrary, proselytes were encouraged, and no one who was disposed to assert a claim according to the authorized prescription, would have been rejected. The instruments by which the blessing was to be conveyed, were few, and specially chosen; but the objects to whom it was addressed, were the whole human race. For wise ends relating to the Messiah, the Jews were distinguished by many peculiar institutions, and preserved a distinct people; but the treasure of divine goodness was, in no age, to be confined to the lineal descendants of Abraham. If, therefore, the gospel was not limited under these prior dispensations, we can have no reason to suppose that it is limited under its present brightest displays,

and when the command is express, that it be "preached to every creature under heaven." That it has not, long before now, been proclaimed in all lands, is not to be attributed to any restriction of the divine benevolence, but to the criminal neglect of man. It is one part of the divine economy, to make us the almoners of his bounty to one another, so that, for a variety of blessings and advantages necessary to their well-being, nations and individuals are mutually dependent. Of how much value is this constitution of things, in rivetting the links of society, in expanding our charities towards the whole human race, and in calling into exercise innumerable feelings and attachments greatly conducive to happiness; a moment's reflection will convince us. The author of spiritual blessings, is also the author of temporal benefits; and in his distribution of both, he pursues a similar plan. He treats us as the subjects of his government, and binds us under weighty responsibilities to execute, in behalf of each other, his published designs. To have given the gospel directly to every human being, would have required a miraculous procedure, unworthy of the Deity, inasmuch as it would have suspended, without reason, the rules of moral dispensation: nor could any thing more be consistently expected from the Supreme Governor, than to issue commands in favour of all, and supply inducements for their accomplishment. The precious grant, therefore, directed to the whole human race, is committed to a few, with a charge, transferred to each successively to whom the blessing is imparted, to communicate the treasure; and he who refuses, either to accept it himself, or to employ his exertions to extend the benefit, violates the greatest of obligations. On those, accordingly, who keep back the heavenly gift from others, rests the guilt of the blood of all, who, through such default, perish for lack of knowledge. To such persons especially, and indeed to all, we earnestly recommend a consideration of the following remarks.

' From this discussion it is natural to infer, that to be unconcerned about the propagation of the gospel among the Heathen, the Mahomedans, the Jews, and ignorant people of every name, is a crime of no small magnitude, and yet too common among those who call themselves Christians. How can such persons pray "thy kingdom come," without condemning themselves by the very petition they utter? The evidence of the truth of Christianity being sufficiently established, God does not employ miracles for its propagation, but leaves it with the subjects of his government as a sacred deposit, which they are to use and to circulate for the benefit of others. According to his plan of moral government, it is subjected to the same issue with other providential events, still under the control of sovereign prerogative in raising up instruments and preparing their way. And this is an argument why we should, with



holy promptitude, improve every favourable opportunity that presents itself to encourage all suitable characters, to send them forth with ardent supplications, that they may diffuse the "sweet savour of Christ," and the salutary streams of the Gospel; and to charge them, that they communicate to others the pure doctrines and precepts of Christianity, and exemplify them in their own tempers and practice. Ought not opulent merchants, statesmen, and sovereigns to take this into account? The poor sheep in the wilderness perish for want of pasture and of shepherds, while alas! countless millions of money are expended in destroying men's lives, or are lavished on pleasures and follies, which in the end involve their votaries in disquietude, remorse, and perdition. May British influence continue no longer so criminally dormant in reference to this momentous object! And when at any time, missionaries are employed for this benevolent purpose, may they be men of God, whose hearts and lives are transcripts of the gospel of peace!" pp. 225, 226.

From the consideration of the aspect of the gospel, the author proceeds to the design of God in its bestowment. This is a subject which has been involved in great perplexity by inaccurate statement. Some persons do not distinguish between purpose, considered as in God, the source of it, in which respect, it must be, like his essence, one and undivided; and, regarded as it relates to different objects, in which view, it is, like them, greatly diversified. Others again, not distinguishing between his sovereign, and what is usually called his rectoral will, speak of the divine designs, as if God were capable of disappointment. His will, absolutely considered, refers to what he designs himself to accomplish, whether it be for, in, or by his creatures; and it is obvious this cannot be frustrated. His will as a moral Governor, or his rectoral will, regards man; whether in fact the subject of special grace or not, merely as an accountable agent, treats him as such, declares what is right, affords the means of performing it, and proclaims the consequence both of yielding and of refusing compliance. The moral tendency of this display of ends and inducements, is plainly, the obedience and well being of the subject. For, on the one hand, the inducements to obey are infinite, while, on the other, every thing is supplied which might deter from transgression. —Death and life, happiness and misery are set before us. Now, as the Divine Being has no secret reservations, no decree that any shall not obey; as he has afforded every allurement to fulfil his commands, and provided every check against negligence and rebellion; and as the will of a Governor is to be deduced from his public acts; it is plain that, considered in that character, his design is '*not to condemn the world, but that the world through Christ might be saved.*' Yet, since he has not sovereignly designed to insure compliance from all the

subjects of his realm, by giving them a right disposition; and since he knows what is in man, if left to himself; he must foresee that many will continue impenitent, and reject the offers of his mercy. As a Lawgiver, he determines the event only hypothetically, as is implied in governing by inducements; but the alternative is fixed:—while as a Sovereign, he secures whatever end he designs;—and failure is impossible. Hence it is inferred, that though the moral end of God's rectoral will is not always accomplished, yet his expectations can in no respect fail of fulfilment. His purpose as a Sovereign regards good ends, which will certainly come to pass, though known to us only by prediction or by eventual accomplishment; but his design as a Governor, respects means, and the consequences of their being improved or neglected: and though the object of the means, or the end which in their own nature they are calculated to effect, is not obtained; yet the design to give them, and to deal with men accordingly, is not, and cannot be frustrated. Our disobedience does not subvert the faithfulness of God, or perplex his counsels by unforeseen events. For a full and accurate discussion of this important topic as applied to God;—to those persons who are ultimately saved;—to those who are not;—to divine law;—to the death of Christ; together with the radical principles which form the basis of a judicious and faithful exercise of the Christian ministry, we refer to the work itself.

The second Section is, "On the claims of the Gospel, or, the obligation of all Men to believe it." An agent is morally obliged to any thing within his physical ability, for which, all things considered, there are rational inducements. Physical obligation is absolute; that which is moral, hypothetical, deriving its force from the consequence, and leaving the subject of it free in the exercise of choice. If, therefore, the result of not believing the gospel is the greatest possible evil, it follows, that, to obey it, there is the highest conceivable obligation. Mistakes on this subject have arisen chiefly from not distinguishing between the *warrant* to believe, and *moral fitness* for the exercise of faith. Men, considered as sinners merely, have the former; but only those who have been enlightened to perceive the adaptation of the Gospel to their circumstances, have the latter. "Who *may* believe is one thing, who *will* is another." If those only who are predestinated to believe, be authorized so to do; men must either at first believe without warrant, which is presumption, not faith; or ascertain their election, even while in unbelief, which is absurd, for "he who believeth not, is condemned already." The fact and grounds of this warrant are considered and established in the work on our table, and the arguments supported by citations from CALVIN, OWEN, POLHILL, and CHARNOCK.



Another source of mistake respecting the extent of obligation, is an erroneous notion about the qualifications of its subjects. To constitute a person accountable, besides natural faculties, freedom, and suitable inducements, every kind of ability, moral as well as natural, has been considered as requisite. That this idea is false, Dr. Williams remarks, is sufficiently apparent from the consequence, that if so, the more wicked a person becomes, the less he is obliged; and, on this supposition, a man may free himself from accountability, and, of course, from punishment altogether, by repeated acts of rebellion and the indulgence of iniquity! For it is certain, that moral impotence is constantly increased by habits of transgression. The following quotation exhibits in a striking manner, how, on this subject, extremes in error sometimes meet.

‘It appears to me, I own, a surprising instance of the influence of prejudice, deduced from false principles and associations, that any intelligent persons, acknowledging the New Testament to be the expression of the divine will, should scruple to confess, that Jesus Christ and all his benefits are there proposed to the acceptance of men as sinners. Is the Gospel the *primary instrument* in the conversion of sinners, or is it not? Who can hesitate to answer in the affirmative? But if so, can it address men in any other character than as *unconverted*? And if they are addressed in that character, are they not strictly *obliged* to accept of the heavenly donation? The negative of this question is confronted by every principle of moral obligation. Beside, the rejection of Christ and his great salvation, ranks with crimes the most aggravated, and involves the subjects of it in the deepest guilt. “How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?” He who rejects God’s testimony, “makes him a liar;” and this is the record, or testimony, “that God hath given to us (that is in the Gospel) eternal life, and this life is in his Son.”\* If the Gospel of the kingdom is commanded to be *preached* to all the world, to every creature, that is, to *all men* in all nations, for the obedience of faith; how can the consequence be evaded, that those who hear are under indissoluble obligation to *believe* the record in its full extent?

‘But as the Holy Scriptures abound with calls, invitations, proposals, and inducements to sinners, in order that they may repent, believe, and obey,—with awful denunciations for their want of compliance; so they abundantly testify concerning the ignorance, hardness of heart, moral impotence, and enmity of men to God, to his law, and the light of truth, while they continue in an unregenerate state. Now the question is, are these two representations to be taken in their *full* extent, or is one of them to be reduced in meaning? The consistent Calvinist asserts the former; but Pelagians and Hyper-

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\* See 1 John v. 9—13.

Calvinists (for they occasionally concur) plead for the latter. The Pelagians prefer an attempt to reduce the doctrine of human depravity; the Hyper-Calvinists, the extent of the gospel call. Now, it is remarkable that those respectively who hold both extremes, (which here amicably meet) attempt their plan of reduction or extenuation on the very same principle, viz. That moral ability is requisite to constitute moral obligation. It is plain, from Scripture, says the Pelagian, that the gospel call is general; *therefore* all men must be possessed of moral ability to comply, which is incompatible with native depravity. But it is plain from Scripture, says the Hyper-Calvinist, that men in their unregenerate state are totally depraved; *therefore* the gospel call is addressed only to those who are divinely quickened to feel their need of the gospel remedy.

'The consistent Calvinist rejects both these inferences, and admits the above statements in their full extent of meaning. The reasons are, because neither can be denied without offering great violence to the plain declarations of God's word; and because both may be perfectly reconciled on satisfactory principles. These principles are,—the true grounds of moral obligation,—and the difference between the rectoral and the sovereign designs of God.' pp. 244—7.

The third Section is, "On moral government as it relates to the rule, object, process, effects, and consequences of the final judgement." In relation to the last of these topics, the doctrine of universal restoration is particularly considered. It is shewn that they, who argue for the final restoration of all, assume false principles; and that, except there were express testimony for its support, there can be no ground to infer such an event. From the nature of things, if the guilty be treated in equity, no mitigation of punishment, much less entire release from it, can ensue; and where is the evidence that sovereign goodness will ever interpose to suspend its operation? Objectors to the perpetuity of misery proceed in their reasonings, on the assumed notion of arbitrary inflictions—the continuance of which would be contrary to benevolence; and of sufferings corrective and remedial,—a description which cannot apply to the pains of final condemnation. On the contrary, the essential character of Jehovah, however benevolent, as it is necessarily the source of enjoyment to those who are conformed to it, must, by the same necessity, occasion the misery of those to whom it is opposed; and the more benevolent, the greater will be the agony arising from goodness slighted, and from conscious opposition. The happiness of the Deity himself, has its source in his holy nature, and it is not supposable that a nature, the reverse of that with which is connected infinite enjoyment, can be



happy. Besides, all felicity in creatures, must arise from participation; for as God is the inexhaustible, so he is its only source; and how can such participation subsist where the character is contrary? Deity is ever the same; the unalterable standard of perfection, and the sole fountain of blessedness. Where he finds conformity to himself, he imparts of his fullness; but by opposition of nature, the overflowing stream is diverted from its course, and leaves the rebellious, destitute and wretched. Hell is therefore the loss of the chief good; and the consciousness of that loss converts what is in itself infinitely amiable, into an occasion of unspeakable wretchedness. Thus God is at once, "LOVE," and a "CONSUMING FIRE;" not arbitrarily, but essentially; not because of any difference in him, but because the very same properties are the spring of immortal felicity to some, and the occasion of misery and despair to others, according as they are, or are not, conformed to his likeness. Since, therefore, those persons who are banished from "God's presence and the glory of his power," have the cause of that sad exile exclusively in themselves, and since there is no evidence that it will ever be removed, whence can we infer their future restoration? They are constant "offenders as well as sufferers," and for these writers to speak of a liberation from punishment, without an alteration of character; or to "represent Hell as a prison for the innocent, who are confined by arbitrary power, in consideration of a few past offences, and who would be very good, obedient and happy, were they emancipated;" is but to proclaim their own ignorance, and to delude themselves and others. Arguments, therefore, from "Divine Love, Immutability, Wisdom, &c." are in this excellent work, justly retorted upon their authors; and their remarks upon the terms "everlasting," "eternal," &c. shewn to be altogether irrelevant. Antecedently to any consideration of those terms, that future punishment *may be* endless, is fully proved; but when, however capable of a restricted interpretation in some connexions, their peculiar application in reference to this topic is regarded, the evidence for the awful *fact* becomes incontrovertible.

Chapter the sixth contains a "view of Sovereignty as a divine prerogative, and of its exercise in adopting ends and means." After vindicating the *term* from a charge of being unscriptural, the author proceeds to explain and demonstrate the proposition. We have already noticed the austere aspect which this delightful attribute has, in the representations of some, been made to assume; particularly when referred to as an inscrutable, but awful, source of suffering, distinct from Equity.

We do not wonder that a system involving such a notion, should be objected to, as surrounding the throne of heaven with unamiable severity; or that it should be described as rigid and gloomy; calculated to repress every joyful sentiment in the breasts of those who receive it, and to fill them with groundless and terrible apprehensions. No arguments deduced from absolute supremacy and subordinate dependence, can support an idea of Deity so opposed to revealed truth, and to the first principles of Reason. The work before us is pre-eminently clear and accurate in its statements and reasonings on this subject, and exhibits a lovely view of the Divine Being in the exercise of this glorious prerogative. The doctrine is first stated to be—"That God possesses an absolute right to will, whatever is not inconsistent with his fixed purpose, his nature, and perfections; or, in one word, his Equity." Then, after some explanatory observations, the author proceeds,

' Let it, therefore, be distinctly understood, that the supreme prerogative, the right of sovereignty now asserted, excludes all purpose and conduct of God that is inconsistent with giving to all their *due*; for, a supposed purpose of withholding from any one his just claim, would be unequitable. Far be it from me to ascribe to the infinitely good and perfect being a prerogative to violate *rectitude*! These things considered, our proposition first proposed for demonstration, may be rendered a little more specific and more appropriate to the intended purpose of this work, thus: The Sovereignty of God implies, an absolute right to will and to do whatever is not inconsistent with *that Equity which gives to all accountable moral agents their DUE*. The importance of this proposition, if true, as a principle in Theology, must be evident to all who have duly attended to the subject. If God were not *essentially sovereign*, in the sense now explained—not only the bible would be an unintelligible book, difficulties insuperable would attend all its other doctrines, and every supposed system would be full of perplexities, but—there would be in my view no system of religion or even morality worth contending for. And yet if this doctrine be established, what becomes of the popular outcry against the Calvinistic doctrines of Grace?

' That Sovereignty, in our sense of the term, is a prerogative essential to Deity, might appear to an impartial mind from this one general consideration, that it is a real *excellency*, an obvious and universally acknowledged excellency, in all rational beings, to possess and exercise a prerogative similar in kind, according to the degree in which it prevails. Therefore, as this, no less than every other "good and perfect gift," proceeds from God, he must possess it in an infinite degree.' pp. 292—4.

The doctrine itself is then established at length from the topics of "God's self-existence and independence"—"his all-sufficiency and absolute liberty"—"the essential imperfection



of all creatures"—"divine wisdom"—and "the chief end for which all things were made." The remarks upon God's absolute liberty, are worthy of close attention, as admirably and completely exposing the fallacy of certain representations of will, which have given rise to mistakes far from harmless, and which have of late acquired an increased currency. That a self-moving power should be attributed to the will, is singular, since, were it possible, it would be a great imperfection. Whatever actions proceeded from such a principle, must be entirely destitute both of virtue and of vice; for, in estimating the morality of any choice, the object designed must be regarded, whereas on the hypothesis adverted to, there could be no influencing object at all. Every act which excludes the employment of the understanding, must be irrational, and, of course, degrading to any intelligent being; yet if the suggestions of intellect have any predisposing energy, so far the will admits of foreign impulse. Besides, if the will absolutely originates actions, conduct is no longer an index of the disposition; for were the volitions subject to no prior influence, a very bad being might as well be expected to act in one way as in another. Fruits would not be indicative of quality, but "*men might gather grapes of thorns and figs of thistles.*" It is here proved, on the contrary, that the will is the mere *organ of power*, and its volitions, whether in subordinate agents or in the Supreme agent, the unfolding of disposition. This we regard as an important statement, the truth of which is established no less by appeals to consciousness, than to reason and scripture; and its application to various points of polemic theology, will be found of the highest utility. At the close of this section, in which it is demonstrated that God has an "absolute right to will and to do, whatever is not inconsistent with equity,—that equity which gives to all accountable moral agents their DUE," the author thus expresses himself,

'I am not aware of any objections that may be urged against the preceding arguments with any plausibility. It remains, therefore, to notice the obvious *consequences* which naturally flow from the proofs given. It follows, first, that God had an absolute right to *predestinate* whom he pleased of his rational creatures to grace and obedience, faith and good works, happiness and glory. Secondly, that God had an absolute right to *redeem* some of the human race from sin and misery with a sovereign *speciality*. Thirdly, that God has an absolute right to confer *special favours* upon, and to infuse gracious principles into whom he pleases. Fourthly, that God has an absolute right to *determine the will* of a free agent by his gracious influence on the heart, whence all virtuous determinations take their immediate rise. Finally, that

God has an absolute right to cause all those who are saints, to *persevere* in a state of grace and obedience into everlasting salvation.—Every one of these consequences, I conceive, follows inevitably from the doctrine before proved; nor does there appear any implication of what is unequitable, in the smallest degree, but much that is kind, benevolent, and merciful. By rejecting this doctrine we admit glaring contradictions and endless confusion; by allowing it we introduce consistency and order, and possess a rational ground of faith and hope, and a sublime and edifying view of the divine character.' pp. 302—3.

Should any persons revolt at these inferences, they ought, at least, both to weigh the proofs of the original position, and to consider whether the inferences are not really implied therein.

From a contemplation of Sovereignty regarded as a divine prerogative, we are, in the second section, introduced to a view of that attribute as it relates to ends and means. Here a variety of most interesting yet difficult subjects are discussed, with a clearness of method, a perspicuity of style, a force of argument, and a pious sublimity of reflection, seldom equalled. Whether all our readers will concur in every statement, or not, of the ability displayed there will be but one opinion. Many a student of the best of sciences, will doubtless feel himself indebted to the author, for important assistance in his researches. As all intelligent beings act from design, and as it is the province of wisdom to seek the best ends by the most laudable means, the first inquiry is, what is the ultimate *end* of God in establishing a moral system of human intelligent creatures? In reply to this, we have the following train of reflection. Prior to decretive choice, every thing stood in the divine all-sufficiency, and in the rank of mere possibilities:—Though no effect can be infinite, yet the adoption of one system in preference to all others, will be excellent according to the designing cause:—though in the amazing plan of creation and Providence, there are “*imperia in imperio*, or in the language of Ezekiel, ‘*a wheel within a wheel*,’ yet it is reasonable to suppose that all the parts, however numerous and complicated to our view, compose one grand whole:”—Admitting divine prescience, the result of free agency must have been known, before any creatures exercised their free will; and yet, with perfect foreknowledge of events, God produced those beings and gave those capacities, without which neither the use nor the abuse of liberty could have taken place.—After apostacy and ruin, men would not recover themselves without the intervention of a necessitating cause.—That cause, as it refers to good only, is a sovereign one, but Equity alone has exercise in reference to defection and to crimes, as well as to the punishment of them.



—The source of failure is not in God, but in the creature:—The occasion for its occurrence was afforded by the exercise of Equity:—Man was not permitted to fall, nor are any redeemed, without reason:—There was a higher end than the display of Equity:—The ultimate one was, the glory of redeeming grace through Jesus Christ:—But this ultimate, is different from the chief, end:—The chief end cannot be an object of Sovereignty, since it admits not of choice: but the ultimate one proceeds from a display of that attribute. These positions have all their appropriate evidence adduced, and their difficulties attentively considered.

From a view of the *end*, the author proceeds to notice the *means* employed in this system; respecting which he observes, that

‘A provision of *means* of recovery, by a concerted method, before offenders had existence, implied a *certainty* of their future fall into a lost condition. If the event was *uncertain*, where would be the wisdom or the need of a redeeming plan prior to the event? And if the agent was free from compulsion and restraint—especially if made “upright,” or “created in knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness,”—how was his fall so infallibly *certain*, as to afford a sufficient ground for the antecedent appointment of a plan of redemption, the ultimate *end* of which must have been fixed prior to the *means* of its accomplishment? Is it conceivable, that certainty can be founded on uncertainty? Here, then, is a divine *prescience*, without a divine *causation* of the event: the former is necessary for the *formation* of a system of end and means, which is accomplished by a progressive series of events; the latter can no more take place than infinite holiness can oppose itself. In short, if the fall and crimes of men were not foreseen as *certain*, there could have been no ultimate end, such as we have proved to exist, or means adopted to attain it. If sovereignty be supposed to appoint, or any way to *cause* the introduction of sin, or the criminality of actions, rectitude would be no rectitude, and sin would be no sin: the folly of scepticism and the madness of atheism would find an excuse at least in theory, though the sting of a guilty conscience would still remain.’ pp. 325—6.

From these considerations it is inferred, first, ‘That God resolved, for a time, as one instance of sovereignty in the use of means, to conduct himself towards our moral system in *strict equity*, whereby an innocent *occasion* would be given for the *cause* of defectibility to shew itself, and for sovereign mercy to be exercised in redemption and salvation.’ In order to foresee the defection of men as infallibly certain, nothing more than this was requisite on the part of God. For, on the one hand, the cause of defectibility is in the free agent himself, not indeed by derivation, for that is impossible; but

as essentially related to a created, and therefore a limited nature: and, on the other hand, the goodness, the holy and virtuous character, of every free *act*, is from sovereign bounty. Hence it follows, that defectibility will infallibly display itself when permitted, and yet no obligation could rest upon God to prevent that consequence; for,

‘ The supposition that God was *bound* to preserve a free agent from sinning, or not to create him at all, is full of atheistic absurdities. It not only accuses the Divine Being of having actually *done* what he *ought not* to have done, or of having *not done* what it *became* him to do; whereby the objector sets up his own wisdom and judgment in opposition to those of the supreme intelligence: but it requires also one of these absurd conditions: first, that God ought not to *do good* by creating intelligent, accountable agents, because it would prove an *occasion*, however innocent, of moral evil. On this principle, he ought not to enact a holy law, because he foreknew that a free agent would transgress it. “Where there is no law, there is no transgression.” But how absurd to require a cessation from doing good—and the enacting of a holy law is doing good—because it may be the occasion of evil! Does this accord with any right principle, any conceivable rule of propriety, that a good act, law, or conduct, should be avoided, because it *may* or *will* be abused? Another condition equally absurd, required in the objection is, that if a free agent be created at all, he ought either to be made indefectible, or his principle of defectibility ought to be counteracted, by the gift not only of natural ability, but also the *benè velle* itself. The former is absolutely impossible in the nature of things, that is, the nature of God and of a creature; and the latter implies, that God *ought not* to be *strictly just* either to himself or to his creatures, lest this should afford *occasion* to any creature of becoming not strictly conformable to rectitude. In short, it implies, that it is *unequitable* in God, not to be so *favourable* as to *prevent* sin. What a contradiction both in terms and in ideas!’

‘ Can it be any thing less than secret atheism in the human heart that can require such absurd conditions? To harbour such an objection, is not only unreasonable, and unprofitable, but impious and ruinous. Who under its influence can value the gospel, as exhibiting a remedy against an evil which God *ought* to have prevented? Who, thus minded, can love a law that condemns his crimes, and for the perfect observance of which he is not qualified? What beauty or glory, or even what equity, can such a jaundiced and envious eye behold in a plan of moral government or a system of recovering grace? Nay, how can such an objector, while under the influence of this prejudice, exercise any devout or virtuous affection towards that supreme Being, who has not prevented sin, which it was in his power to prevent, and which the objection absurdly supposes he *ought* to have prevented? Let the unreasonable, the ungrateful, the rebellious mind, tormented with gloomy suspicions,



that *will not submit* by faith and love, humility and adoration, gratitude and cheerful obedience, to the Equity of God in *permitting* sin, and to his Sovereignty in *salvation* from it, read his character and his doom in these words: "Then he who had received one talent, came and said, Lord I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed; and I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, there thou hast what is thine. His lord answered and said unto him, Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knowest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed: thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury (or interest.) Take therefore the talent from him and give it unto him, who hath ten talents. For unto every one that hath (i. e. improves by cheerful diligence) shall be given, and he shall have abundance; but from him that hath not (i. e. improves not by cheerful diligence) shall be taken away, even that which he hath. And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outward darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." \* pp. 328—31.

From this account two classes of persons will dissent: those who assert that sin, in its own nature, is positive, and those who plead for the absolute contingency of moral events. The former, however, would do well to consider how they can exonerate themselves from the charge, either of denying any moral turpitude in sin at all, or of imputing evil to the infinite source of good: the latter, to be consistent, must evidently limit divine prescience. Some, indeed, venture to assert, that as God, though omnipotent, does not perform all possibilities, so, though omniscient, he does not know all contingencies. This idea, however, cannot be reconciled with just notions of these respective attributes. From their own nature, the objects of power must be finite; those of knowledge, infinite: as, therefore, on the one hand, there cannot be an infinite *exertion* of power, so, on the other, there cannot be in Deity a dormant ability to know. Omnipotence does not necessarily imply the actual exertion of any energy *ad extra*; but between actually knowing and being ignorant, there is no medium.

Other instances of Sovereignty in the choice of means, are,—‘the appointment of a *general Mediator*, and a *special discrimination* with respect to the Saviour, and the saved.’ In considering the first of these displays of Sovereignty, the arguments offered in defence of a supposed absolute mercy, and the sufficiency of penitence, are met and refuted; and

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\* Matt. xxv. 24—30.

the moral necessity of the mediatorial expedient is established. In noticing the second, it is shewn, that, besides procuring suitable means of reconciliation, by his obedience to the law, and by offering to the righteous Governor, a sacrifice of unlimited worth—a price of redemption sufficient for all—Christ was appointed to be a surety for the actual salvation of those who eventually enjoy that privilege. In the former capacity, the Messiah appears as the messenger of the Supreme Governor; but in the latter, as the minister of sovereign grace. By the one office, moral inducements, and grounds of acceptance are supplied, which, by the other, are rendered effectual for the ends designed.

Chapter the seventh contains a view of the Sovereignty of GRACE; first, in different relations generally, and then as subjective in particular. After noticing the differences which subsist upon the subject of grace, and mentioning the general meaning of the term, it is observed that, in holy scripture, the word sometimes denotes—‘an exhibition of divine favour;’—at other times, ‘the required effect of that exhibition;’—and sometimes again,—‘Divine influence generating a spiritual principle; or a holy state of mind thus produced.’ For the confirmation of these statements, a variety of evidence is produced, together with many incidental remarks and inferences, as appropriate as they are interesting. Particularly, the facts, that the same graces are sometimes attributed to the Spirit, and at others represented as the effect of the word; some times declared to be the gift of God, and at others required as the duty of man; are illustrated and reconciled. The doctrine of divine influence, in which consists the very essence of the gospel, and without which even a scheme of ethics must be radically defective, is vindicated from the attacks of sceptical philosophers, and supported by evidence judiciously selected, and as it appears to us irresistible. From the whole discussion arise the following conclusions:—that grace displayed in the word, though sovereign in its origin, compared with the unworthiness of its objects, is only the benevolence of God in exercise, in relation to the plan and order of moral government; and can be of no other nature than that of *moral means*, in the manner of a proposal;—that the grace which is merely objective, is properly and exclusively a moral cause;—that the grace which consists in the Holy Spirit’s immediate energy, is a physical cause,—that is, a cause which produces its appropriate effects without depending on the *intellect*, the *will*, or the moral agency of the subject;—that of the three ideas expressed by the term grace, two are used in a plain and proper, and one in a fi-



gurative sense;—that Christian graces, as required by God, and as exercised by man, are not, in fact, produced, without the joint concurrence of both objective and subjective grace,—the truth of the word, and a principle from the Spirit;—and, that what actually determines the will to the choice of real good, properly termed motive, consists of two parts—an object exhibited, and a principle infused.

The principle infused is sometimes denominated subjective grace, the consideration of which occupies the second section of this chapter. To this part of the work, we would particularly direct the attention of our readers. They will find in it a close and masterly investigation of a subject, respecting which, it is of great importance to form clear and just views. That we should have, indeed, a complete knowledge of the manner in which divine grace operates in producing a change, characterized as a regeneration, we are taught in Holy Scripture, is not only unnecessary, but, in our present state, unattainable: yet there are some things respecting it, which we, even now, both may, and ought to know; and, of whatever else we may be ignorant, we should be especially cautious not to form, much less to propagate, wrong notions respecting a subject so essential to Christianity. If it is not requisite to understand all that is true, it is certainly dangerous to believe any thing which is false. What, as to its essential nature, and precise modal distinctions, that first effect of divine influence upon the mind is, which is the source of all right apprehensions, becoming affections, and suitable conduct in religion, it were vain to attempt to define: but that, in fact, there is such an internal, direct result of divine power, is alike deducible from reason and from scripture. Of this truth, such evidence as, to a candid mind, will, we conceive, prove convincing, is adduced from both these sources. For a complete discussion, therefore, of the principal questions which arise on the subject, we refer our readers to the work itself: but as we regard the doctrine as both interesting and important, especially considering the diversities of opinion respecting it, we shall make a few remarks, tending to obviate the most popular mistakes.

Let it be first inquired, in what subjective grace consists, or what that is, which constitutes a person regenerate? In reply to this question, we must distinguish between what is publicly evidenced, and formally recognized in divine government, and what is primary, and virtual in the sight of God;—between what exists as a principle merely, and what is displayed by appropriate exercises. No man can ascertain that he is the subject of a divine change, but by his advances

in Christian knowledge, in heavenly affections, and in righteous acts. It is by penitence and faith only, that, according to the Gospel rule, he is to be considered as having a title to the blessings which belong to those who are born of God. Hence the new man in Holy Scripture, is described, in a variety of places, as one who is possessed of spiritual understanding, holy feelings, and virtuous conduct. It is in this practical sense, that man, as a moral agent, is called upon to make himself a new heart, to wash and purify himself, and indeed, to possess all the sentiments, and perform all the acts of a "*new man*;" in other words, to become what he ought to be; and that because he possesses all the requisite grounds of accountability. It is in this sense too, that the word, as the great instrument of God's government, is represented as the means of our regeneration. Whatever is required of us, divine truth, in some way objectively presented, is doubtless the moral means of producing; so that when we are renewed in "*knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness*," we are spoken of, as "*begotten again with the word of truth*."

But besides this avowed and acknowledged existence of the "*new man*," consisting in the formation of the Christian character in all its parts, which has been gradual in its progress; in producing which the word has been a powerful instrument; and in which we were ourselves active;—there is another more restricted and initial sense, in which a man may be denominated regenerate. It is plain, that the course of conduct and the state of mind above described, must have a beginning;—that they must have a cause;—that there must be a moment when that cause commences its operations; and that the change then produced, must be instantaneous. Every man must be either regenerate or unregenerate. There is no instant of his life, when he is not in either the one or the other state before God. The transition, therefore, will not admit of gradations. Now this primary change in the mind cannot be rightly called sentimental, since it is antecedent in order, both right feelings and to just religious views, and previously essential to their very formation: "*for the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned*." It is not any external irradiation upon truth presented to us, like the beams of the Sun illuminating objects, and thus rendering them clearly discernible, which will ensure a proper perception of them. For, though the effect of holy influence on the mind, when we contemplate truths which had often before been presented to us, is, as if they were surrounded with a sudden brightness; yet, an appeal to our



own consciousness at the time, as well as a moment's reflection on the nature of mental operations, will convince us that the change is really within. The attention is arrested, the energies of the mind are called into exercise, and employed with an interest and a complacency before unknown. We are become, in apostolic language, "*spiritual*," and therefore, "*judge all things*." But, by the unregenerate man, sacred truth, however clearly proposed, however bright it may shine without, will never be properly understood; for it is contrary to its nature to produce any effect on the faculties, by disposing them to a suitable attention, and a becoming regard to its dictates. If truth can generate nothing morally good, unless by being embraced; and if it is never heartily received antecedent to the renewal of the mind; to consider it as instrumental in effecting the original change, is plainly a contradiction. It is to say, that the due reception of truth is the cause of regeneration, while, at the same time, regeneration is itself the cause of a due reception of truth. Thus the effect is the cause of its cause. Regeneration then, in its primary sense, cannot include the actual formation of right sentiments and religious affections, but is the predisposing principle, by which the objects morally calculated to produce them, become effectual for that end. Though truths of an inferior kind require only a good understanding, and a clear exhibition, in order to be known and improved; both scripture and experience evince, that something more is necessary, before we shall know and suitably appreciate those, which are intimately connected with our salvation. There is an opposition, a secret enmity to them, in a mind devoted to irregular attachments, and governed by the lower interests of this transitory life. The loveliness of Deity, the grace of the Saviour, and the beauties of holiness, will never charm one who is enslaved by passion, and accustomed to seek all his pleasures in sensible objects, or in investigations merely literary and scientific. The more clearly the spiritual nature and exalted purity of heavenly things are represented, the more forcibly will such a disposition revolt from them as uncongenial with its feelings. There must be an inward corrective power, generating a new taste, and producing an adaptation in the tendencies of the mind towards the exalted realities of which the Scriptures testify, before there will be any due appreciation of their value, or perception of their loveliness. That there is a certain upright state of mind, which, antecedent to exercises of will, is necessary towards a right election, when objects however excellent are presented, was known even to Pagan philosophers. "*Rursus voluntas non erit recta, nisi habitus animi rectus fuerit: ab hoc enim est voluntas*," says Seneca; and, indeed, the proofs of it are in every man's

consciousness, and within his observation. To love the very things, which both the Scriptures and the practice of men testify we naturally dislike, is the very essence of Christian feeling: but will the mere display of objects, against which we have an enmity, produce affection? If indeed our alienation were the mere result of intellectual mistake, a correct exhibition of truth would remove it; but if it is more deeply laid, if it is founded in nothing less than opposition of heart to rectitude and holiness, as they really are in themselves, something more must be necessary. "*The ignorance that is in us,*" is not merely that of one who wants information, but that of one who has no relish for the objects proposed, and who, therefore, cannot estimate their worth;—of one who wants the ability to enjoy them. The "darkness" of which we read in the sacred pages, does not surround the objects externally, but it hangs over the mind, and cannot be removed but by *His shining into the heart, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness*. As, to persons unaccustomed to enjoy any pleasures but those of business or society, unsusceptible of impressions from the sublime and the beautiful, nature in vain unfolds her innumerable charms; so, to a heart depraved and worldly, divine grace and the sanctity of true religion, present nothing capable of affording delight. The most skilful touches will not awaken melody from an instrument out of tune, nor will the string spontaneously vibrate to any sound but that with which its tone is in unison. *The Charmer may charm wisely, but to the adder which stoppeth her ears,* it will be unavailing skill. To spiritual things the ear is shut, the eye is closed: the "*working of God's mighty power*" must "*open the eye,*" must give the "*hearing ear,*" and communicate the susceptible, the feeling heart; or Christ himself may exhibit the beauty of religion, may proclaim the methods of mercy, and employ means the best adapted to ensure attention, without effect. The Spirit of Christ must be in us, must "*work in us to will and to do;*" must "*circumcise the heart;*" must "*take away the stone,*" and "*form us for himself;*" or else all means will be ineffectual. *The tree must be made good* before it will produce *good fruit,* and the *ground must be prepared* before it receives the seed, or else it will continue barren. If the word, which is that seed, fall on sterile or a thorny soil, whatever its virtue, or its "quickeningspower," disappointment will be the only harvest we shall ever reap. Although the grain of wheat has life, it will not grow on the naked rock. Would any one suppose that the same truths, if presented with equal clearness, would alike succeed in raising the sentiments, which in their own nature they are calculated to inspire, when addressed to Satan and to the Angel



Gabriel? Will there not, in every case, be a diversity in the effect, corresponding to the difference in the mind addressed? Must we not, in accuracy of conception, suppose, that in the mind of Adam, previous to any exercises of understanding and will towards divine objects, there was a certain antecedent congruity with them, which ensured right elections? Was his rectitude the mere effect of moral means? Could the presentation of good inducements, of itself effect with certainty the right volition? Might he not even then have chosen ill? and if so, was there no reason why he did not? Do the brightness of evidence, or the suitableness and excellence of objects, give a holy sanity to the intellectual and voluntary faculties; or a correct principle to the heart? If so, how could sin arise in heaven? Could there be a brighter irradiation of divine beauty than when the first apostate fell? It is plain, the source of choice and action, whether right or wrong, must be within. We therefore infer, that antecedent to the reception of religious truth, and without which it will never be embraced, there is a change wrought upon the mind, by which it becomes pre-disposed towards the objects therein presented; and receives a new, a primary principle, the source of all that is excellent in sentiment, and lovely in practice.

In the above reasoning, we have employed the word *sentiment*, as indicating truth actually embraced, and operating upon the will and the affections; because it is in this sense, that it must be employed by those who speak of it as the result of truth proposed: but there is another meaning of the term, agreeably to which, the change above described may, analogically, be called sentimental. The word is sometimes employed to designate a primary quality of mind, by virtue of which a person is susceptible of the emotions of taste. It is a pre-disposition to certain lively feelings, which will be excited by the occurrence of objects suitable to produce them; and without which, however adapted in themselves to awaken admiration and impart delight, we should behold the most picturesque scenery with indifference. In an unrenewed man, this spiritual *tact* is wanting, and it would be as absurd to suppose that truths, objectively proposed, would give it, as that the sight of the stormy ocean, or a well watered valley, would communicate the faculty of taste.

If, in the nature of things, this spiritual susceptibility must precede a practical reception of truth, it is plain that the cause of it cannot be *moral*. Is it not essential to a moral cause that it be addressed to the intellect and to the will? that it be hypothetical? that the effect be suspended on acceptance or refusal? Is then the cause of regeneration, in the primary sense of it, dependent on human choice? Or can truth operate in any other way than by

voluntary election? That influence which renews, "*makes us willing in the day of God's power*"—ensures a right volition. But can that which makes us willing, be itself proposed to us as an object of choice? and if not, must it not be essentially distinct from moral means? That which is addressed to a voluntary agent as an inducement, and that which effects its end independently of choice, must be causes essentially distinct in their nature; and however connected by sovereign appointment, or in different ways combining their respective influences to produce one appointed end, they ought by no means to be confounded with each other. To speak of them both as moral causes, is to disregard the clearest distinctions, and to subject those, whom we teach, to dangerous misconceptions. The one presents reasons, the other prepares us to understand and appreciate them: by the one are exhibited to us objects which are right and suitable to our necessities; by the other we are made to regard them as good and desirable: the one persuades, and the other ensures the success of persuasion: the one is objective; the other, though we are taught to pray for it as graciously promised, is not, and from its nature cannot be, proposed to our choice: the one is, in short, moral; and the other, as contradistinguished from it, is rightly denominated physical. The term physical, however, is not to be understood as synonymous with natural, but as marking any exertion of positive power, to whatever end it may be directed, which does not operate by inducement or the mere force of reason. But it is asked, if the cause be physical, must not the effect also be physical? Do not causes produce effects of the same character with themselves? In some respects they do, in others they do not. If the one be positive, so will be the other; but it does not follow that what is produced, should have the same denomination with the source of its existence. Water is formed by a mixture of airs; and a solid by that of fluids. There cannot be a more striking distinction than between matter and spirit, yet the latter is the cause of the former, and the difference is not in degree merely, but in kind. That the power exerted, considered as a cause, should have one appellative, and the result another, is by no means singular; since the end of an exertion of physical energy may be, to produce, not a new substance or faculty, but a right order, an harmonious congruity, a just adaptation to some office. The mind of man, in reference to divine things, is naturally in a state of disorder: not only is it indisposed to inquire into them, but, if accidentally directed that way, they are not properly represented by the understanding; and even if the intellect does dictate rightly, the affections are not interested, and the will is disinclined to obey. To adjust these irregulari-



ties, and to restore these principles of action to a state suited to a proper discharge of their functions, are, from the very nature of man as an accountable moral agent, to produce a moral effect. Yet the power by which this change is accomplished, since it is the essential property of a moral cause to operate by inducement, cannot be of that character; and since inducements are offered in vain to a mind not susceptible of them, its exertion is necessary previously to a right issue when they are presented. Thousands who have had every evidence of which divine truth is capable, have nevertheless rejected it; and yet facts have evinced, that the mind of a poor negro could be so wrought upon by a superior impulse, as to be disposed to renounce the follies of idolatry, to long for something unknown which might satisfy his mind and heart, and to be prepared for the immediate reception of Christianity as soon as it was announced. Infants and idiots, who are placed beyond the range of moral influence, must experience a renewal fitting them for heaven, before they can be admitted there; and yet with regard to either of those, who will say, that the alteration is merely physical? It is not true, therefore, that effects must, in all cases, be of the same character with their causes.

Having shewn that this primary change must precede the right reception of truth, and that it cannot, therefore, take its rise from a moral cause; it follows, that the influence which produces it, must be distinct from that of the word, or of truth in any way objectively proposed;—and that it must operate directly on the mind. There is, however, a sense in which the word may less properly be called an instrument, even of the primary regeneration we have described; although neither possessing inherent efficiency to secure that result, nor, from its nature as a moral cause, capable, by any supposed influence upon, or in it, of having such power communicated to it. The reason is, that God has, in his infinite wisdom, seen fit, generally, though not necessarily, to attach the administration of the Spirit to the dispensation of Gospel truth. To renew, is his immediate work; but he chuses to perform it chiefly in those people, to whom are sent the objective means which are to elicit its energies. Where he designs to produce a moral adaptation to receive the message, there he provides that the proclamation shall be made; and since the renewed disposition becomes known only by its exercises, and those exercises are induced by means of truth, the recognition of the one, entirely depends on the exhibition of the other. It is under the dispensation of divine truth, that we perceive the fruits of regeneration, and, therefore, we call the former the instrument of the latter. "*It hath pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save*

*them that believe.*" Thus men are also spoken of as instrumental in conversion, not because they have power to change the human heart, but because God has chosen to connect his work with theirs: yet, as in the latter case, the operation of Deity is not to be confounded with the efforts of man, so neither, in the former case, are the distinctions between that influence which changes the heart, and the truth which addresses the understanding, to be exploded or overlooked. Nor does this representation, in the least, either diminish the importance of the word, or weaken our inducements to make it known. The word, thus considered, answers all the purposes in reference to moral government, for which its nature is adapted; and from the established course of the divine procedure in his sovereign acts, we have not ground to expect the exertion of God's saving power, where we neglect to send the testimony of his abounding grace; while, on the contrary, both his conduct and his promise, lead us to believe, that where we announce his truth, he will prepare the mind for its reception. Divine influence, therefore, and the influence of truth, are so intimately connected as to be seldom disjoined, and yet so distinct, as, from their respective natures, to be incapable of blending in operation, though the ultimate end of *each* is the same.

The representation here given, though deduced from clear principles of reason, does not depend on abstract argument for its support, since it is the obvious and repeatedly inculcated doctrine of Scripture. We cannot here make a regular induction of evidence by particular citations, but a few remarks on the classes of texts which corroborate our statement may be useful. As to the passages which have been adduced against the notion of direct influence, we may observe, that it may be shewn, by their connexion, that they refer, not to initial regeneration, but to that which is evidenced by its effects, and as such, publicly recognized in the moral system of divine administration. To quote such passages, therefore, is irrelevant to the argument; the influence of the word, in that sense, being fully admitted by those who oppose the notion of its proper efficiency in producing the primary change. But for the principles defended in the work before us, we may mention all those descriptions of the natural state of man, which speak of his moral incapacity to improve the best adapted means; which represent him as "*having eyes but seeing not*;" "*ears but hearing not*;" and a "*heart which perceiveth not*;" as being "*blind*," "*dead*," and destitute of that "*Spirit of God*," without which no man "*knoweth the things of God*." To these may be added, all which describe the Divine energy as exerting itself *in*, and not merely *towards* man; as taking



away the "*stony heart*," as giving a "*new one*," as "*preparing*," "*circumcising*," "*opening*," and "*shining into it*;"—as also "*opening the eyes*," and "*the ears*," and giving the rectified will. Next to these, such as characterize the power employed in effecting this alteration, as "*the exceeding greatness of God's mighty power, the same which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead*,"—an energy so great, that the time of his exerting it is called "*the day of his power*:"—expressions, which can, by no means, accord with any consistent notion of a power merely moral; any more than the terms which designate it as "*creating*," giving "*life*," "*quicken*ing," and "*raising from the dead*," can agree with the idea of instrumental agency. Nor must we omit the many places where God is said to "*dwell*" in the regenerate, to "*live in them*," to "*pour his spirit upon them*;" and where they are called "*the Temples of God*;" declared to have the "*spirit of Christ*;" to be "*one with him*;" and to be a "*body*," of which he is the animating "*head*;"—peculiarities of language, to refer which to the indwelling of truth, merely, would, it seems to us, be exceedingly rash and unbecoming. Besides those already introduced, figurative illustrations are very numerous, in which the seed of truth is represented, not as *making* the ground good; but as, when successful, falling upon that which was previously good; and the tree, as possessing a good quality before it can bear good fruit; of which kind, nevertheless, must be even the first reception of the word. The last class which we shall mention, and which includes a great many very decisive passages, is that in which the term grace is so employed, as necessarily to imply an inward principle; a something entirely distinct from either favour towards man, or truth addressed to him; and which is considered as the cause of his differing from others in the possession of Christian tempers and the practice of superior virtues.

Though we trust there are few of our inquiring readers who will fail to consult the work before us, we cannot help enriching our pages with the following quotation on this subject.

'The Holy Scriptures are abundantly explicit, and therefore decisive, in favour of the position, that divine influence produces in a direct manner, a holy principle in the soul. What less can be meant by the following declarations, among many others? '*Create in me a clean heart*'—'*I will put my spirit within them*'—'*I will pour out upon them the spirit of grace*'—'*Except a man be born of the spirit*'—'*My Father will give his holy spirit to them that ask*'—'*Who were born of God*'—'*He worketh in us to will and to do*'—'*The Lord opened the heart of Lydia.*' To transcribe all the passages which

tend to confirm this point, would be to swell these passages unnecessarily. What unprejudiced reader would think of ascribing to objective means these operations and effects? Those who deny the direct influence of the Holy Spirit on the mind, in order that the word may produce its appropriate effect, intend, no doubt, to maintain the honour of revealed truth, and the importance of right sentiments; but we should remember, that they do most honour to the holy scriptures who attribute to them that office which infinite wisdom has appointed for them, and who do not ascribe to them what is inconsistent with their claims. But do they claim the prerogative of '*opening the eyes of the blind?*'—of '*taking away the heart of stone, and giving a heart of flesh?*'—of '*creating a clean heart, and giving a right spirit?*'—of '*working in us to will and to do?*'—Where are the sacred passages? When they are produced, they may be considered.—Will it be pleaded, that the hypothesis here opposed is more conformable to reason? Then

'To reason let us appeal. It is acknowledged, that plain scriptural evidence ought to impose humble silence on all conjectural reasonings. But for such evidence, against the preceding view of subjective grace, we look in vain. The only remaining alternative, therefore, is to examine what interpretation of Scripture is the most inconsistent with clear principles. But what can be more inconsistent with just principles of reason, than to suppose that objective means constitute the *whole* of the motive? or that there can be a motive unconnected with the antecedent state of the mind? Yet, one of these unreasonable suppositions is unavoidable, if we maintain, that there is no gracious influence but what is in, or inseparable from the word. What other supposition is conceivable? Not, I presume, that divine influence itself, as well as the promise of it, is of the nature of objective means. The divine spirit is not like a sail subject to the will of man, but as a propitious gale which blows '*where it listeth.*' It is ours to spread the sail, but not to command the wind; to expand our desires, but not to '*direct the Spirit of the Lord.*'—More particularly,

'1. If there be no direct sovereign influence, no subjective grace, but what is involved in, or inseparably connected with, the verbal testimony, then, no one can be the subject of salvation but he who *understands* that testimony. For of what use is a testimony to him who does not understand the terms or the language in which it is delivered? To him it is no testimony, as to an infant, an idiot, the deaf and dumb, or a child uninstructed through the neglect of the better informed. Is it reasonable to suppose, that the Spirit of the Lord is so absolutely restrained to the testimony, that no one can be possessed of *salvation* without understanding it? But salvation from sin and wrath is inconceivable, except we admit a divine influence and a spiritual regeneration. The inference therefore is unavoidable, that there is a sovereign subjective grace, in some instances, without the word; or else there can be no salvation for infants, idiots, the deaf and dumb, or any human beings but such as have a verbal testimony conveyed to



the understanding. The conclusion is not, that all such persons *must* be saved, but, on the principle opposed, that none *can* be saved; which is a presumptuous limitation of God's mercy, and a degrading reflection on Jesus Christ as the Redeemer, as if he *could not* save any without the use of words; not to add, how revolting the thought is to Christian feelings.

'2. If there be no divine direct influence, none but what is inseparable from the word as its vehicle or instrument, the sentiment must be sought either from revelation, or from the supposition of subjective grace, as before stated, being inconsistent with reason and analogy. Many passages have been produced as direct proofs of our doctrine, and no passage is objected which is not capable of being explained in perfect consistency with those proofs. It follows, therefore, as the opposite interpretations cannot be both true, that the one must be more consistent with the analogy of faith, than the other. Here also we may rest secure, until something plausible be brought on the other side. Nor does it appear that the objectors plead the *reasonableness* of their sentiment, abstracted from divine testimony; for they do not pretend to establish it by rational principles, or by fair analogy. But we appeal to both, as well as to direct scripture proofs, in harmony with the whole current of divine revelation.

'3. As the sentiment, that the divine testimony *alone* effects a spiritual change in the human mind, is incompatible with the actual depravity of human nature, ascertained both by scripture and universal experience; so the notion that there is no *direct* influence, none but what is dependent upon, or inseparable from, a verbal testimony, confounds two modes of divine operation which are, in their own nature, perfectly distinct. What can be plainer than the fact, that the verbal testimony of scripture is of the nature of moral means, and that such means produce a moral effect according to the moral principle of the agent? '*Do men gather grapes from thorns, or figs from thistles?*' or '*does a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit?*' Every moral agent, unavoidably, must have *some* principle, either good or bad, *prior* to the declaration of the testimony. Is it a good principle? Then it must be such without any concurrence of the word; for, from the supposition, it was in the subject, before the verbal testimony was made known to him. Is it a bad principle? Then how comes it to be changed? If by the direct influence, the point in question is given up; but if by the word, the contradiction is involved, that moral means are not moral means, but some physical influence producing a moral principle. If it be said, that divine influence changes the moral principle *by means* of the word, this involves the same contradiction as before; as it declares a moral mean, the verbal testimony, to be, not a moral mean, but a physical operation. It supposes divine influence changing the unalterable truth of things. It ascribes to a moral instrumentality what, in the nature of things, belongs to a physical cause exclusively. On the theory under consideration, if there be any conversion effected, it is a change of the nature of the word into what it

was not before, and not the nature of the man, or his moral principle.

‘The true state of the question is not, whether some great and glorious change be effected in the human mind by means of the divine testimony, for this is confessed on both sides; but whether the Holy Spirit produces, by means of the word, a change of moral principle. And what else is the affirmative of this question, but an assertion, that a moral man is converted into a physical instrument by the Holy Spirit, in order that it may effect a change of principle, from bad to good; and which effect of the word, in the hand of the Spirit, is the *cause* why the word produces that very effect! Allow a direct influence,—whether it be simultaneous with the testimony or not, does not affect the question,—and all these absurd consequences are avoided. The fact is, that the two operations, that of the Spirit, and that of the word, are of a character perfectly distinct, however coincident as to time and place. The one is physical, the other moral; the one *in* the subject, the other *towards* him; the one regards him as a passive recipient, the other as a free agent; the one proceeds from God as a sovereign benefactor, the other proceeds from him as a moral governor; the one on the plan of Sovereignty, the other of Equity. Divine influence is a physical cause of a moral effect, or of a moral principle, which is a kind of creation: but the operation of the word on the mind, is that of a moral man, the tendency of which is to produce a moral effect, but which, in reality, is successful or unsuccessful, according to the moral principle, or actual state of the mind when addressed. Where the operation of the divine Spirit produces a holy principle, the sacred word produces, also, the happiest effects; as filial fear, unfeigned faith, supreme love of God, and ‘*hope that maketh not ashamed* ;’ in a word, a body of Christian graces. The very existence of such effects depends on objects revealed, but not so the existence of a holy principle, which depends exclusively on the operation of the holy Spirit. If we would form a just estimate of the sentiment now defended, we should be far from regarding it as a point of indifference; for though preachers and writers may be very useful, without forming an accurate judgment on the question, yet the systematic denial of it is not of the same cast. It is a sentiment of radical importance, if we regard its genuine consequences, since from wrong notions of the Spirit’s operations, the danger is not small of denying them altogether.

‘There is reason to believe that many are betrayed into wrong conclusions on this point, from the circumstance of a saving change being manifested, and Christian graces being produced, by means of divine truth. But since the scriptures explicitly teach us, that divine influence is also necessary in order to produce these effects, they hastily infer, that the word is an instrument in the hand of the *Spirit*, as the shortest way to settle the business, without aiming at clear ideas, or caring for accurate discrimination. But were they to take the trouble of reflecting upon the subject, (and surely its importance demands this,) they would see, that the



word is an instrument in the hand of God, only as a moral governor, and that the influence of the Spirit, in the nature of the case, admits of no instrument. The moral governor operates by instrumental means, and so does the human mind; and of this character is the word of truth in both respects. But a divine agency in the mind is, in scriptural estimation, a sovereign creating act, which admits of no medium of operation. To withhold from it this character, is virtually to deny its existence.' pp. 376—84.

We will not apologize to our readers for the length to which our remarks on this point have extended, being persuaded, with our author, that right views of this point are of radical importance for the maintaining, consistently and effectually, the peculiarities of Christian truth. Those persons, indeed, who, without attempting any explanation, adhere to the language of Scripture, provided they give it in its connexion, may effectually instruct their hearers. But since, to receive advantage from language, some ideas must be attached to it; and since it is one part of a teacher's duty to guard those whom he professes to instruct, against misconception; there are few who do not, by remarks upon the text, shew what they conceive to be inculcated. And who will say that a false exposition can be harmless? If received, it not only nullifies the design of the passages adduced, and produces great perplexity in the mind, but leads ultimately to very dangerous consequences. He who has been taught that there is no kind of influence mentioned in Holy Scripture but what is involved in the truth, may be led into an inquiry, whether, in the nature of things, such an influence can be; and on finding that the notion is incongruous, may inadvertently be brought to disbelieve the doctrine of divine influence altogether. From false views of a fact to the denial of it, the steps are few; and though some never take those steps, yet it is obvious that a dangerous road should not be left accessible. They who, in France, judged of Christianity from the public representations of it they witnessed, easily inferred that the whole system was priestly imposture.

Having in the preceding parts laid a deep and ample foundation, the author proceeds, finally, to raise upon it a fair and magnificent superstructure. It is a truly Christian edifice, a temple of God, just in its proportions, rich in material, and beautiful in ornament. There are no incumbrances that destroy the harmony of the effect; no weak parts that endanger the stability of the whole. While some waste their time and strength in building upon sand, and others in piling upon the rock perishable substances, we are here taught to build for eternity. The basis of all orderly, salutary, and delightful emotions of the heart, must be clear and sound

judgement. Principles are here well laid in the understanding, preserved from vacillancy, by clear and accurate statement, and fortified by close, solid, and well conducted argument;—argument not constructed from conjectural data, but from the word of God, and immutable relations. These principles are thus applied to the resolution of doubts, the clearing of difficulties, and the developement of practical virtues. They are shewn to be, not idle speculations, amusing subtleties, but evident and important truths, affording refreshment to the mind, giving vigorous impulses to the heart, and regulating all its emotions.

The first section of the concluding chapter, contains “a view of Equity and Sovereignty in reference to a contemplation of the works of creation and providence.” Here the “differences of objects and events are considered in relation to their appropriate causes;—particularly, the great and the small, the strong and the weak, the beautiful and the deformed in creation;—the good and the evil, the virtues and the vices of men, in their individual and associate capacities, as events in providence.” Here the mind is directed to compare and discriminate,—to refer deformity and defect to the creature, and to raise its contemplations of the great and the beautiful, to Him who is the infinite source of loveliness and excellence. While the grandeur and grace which are diffused over the objects that surround us, awaken in our breasts a transport of feeling;—far from being absorbed in selfish delight, or from worshipping the immediate occasions of our pleasure, we should raise our spirits in devout admiration to the cause,—to Him who

‘ Warms in the sun, refreshes in the breeze;  
Glow in the stars, and blossoms in the trees;  
Lives through all life, extends through all extent,  
Spreads undivided, operates unspent.’

Men are filled with rapture at the limited beauty of nature, but its boundless Source is neglected. As if self-constituted, nature were to them a deity; while He, to whom she herself owes her attractions, and on whose wisdom and power she every moment depends, is denied any share of their attachment and veneration: yet, with awful inconsistency and pride, to him do they secretly impute imperfection and suffering. God made us as we are, say they, and, therefore, “why doth he yet find fault?” This arises from neglect in investigating the sources of things. Not so the enlightened philosopher.

‘ When he contemplates himself and the diversified objects with which he is encompassed, he cannot fail to observe innu-



merable instances of those opposite qualities; and to an investigating mind it is interesting to seek their respective sources. Of the one, what other ultimate source is conceivable, or strictly speaking, possible, than divine sovereignty? When thought ascends to sovereign goodness and wisdom, power, and will, no perplexing questions remain upon the subject. From the sovereign benefactor every species of beauty emanates, to him it returns, and to him every voluntary and reflecting agent ought to ascribe it. And the more enlightened, the more spiritual, the more transformed into the divine similitude the mind is, the more will it be delighted to dwell, in meditation, on the infinite original. 'For how great is his goodness, and how great is his beauty!'

'On the other hand, would we know the source of deformity? It is the same as that of every other defect. And what can this be but a negative principle, consisting in limitation, or the want of ulterior perfection? The Deity is not its *cause*, but it stands *related* to his equity; more than they have, whether of being or of beauty, is not their due.' pp. 411, 412.

If in surveying the works of Creation, it is advantageous to be constantly recurring to the creation, while we carefully separate the products of his infinite skill and almighty power from whatever is deficient and negative, and therefore not communicated qualities; it is not less so, to discriminate justly in surveying the procedure of Providence. Few things perplex an ill-informed mind more than the apparent inequality of distribution in the administration of affairs.

'Here, says our author, we behold wealth and poverty, health and sickness, dominion and slavery, peace and war, justice and oppression, truth and falsehood, virtue and vice, happiness and misery, strangely interwoven. Where shall we find a prism to separate in contemplation these blended rays? By what means may we be able satisfactorily to refer each quality to its own proper source? To ascribe all indiscriminately to the will of God, is a convenient subterfuge for imbecility or sloth, pride or impatience. On this hypothesis, these attributes themselves must be referred to him, and he would also be the father of deceit and falsehood; the source of folly, envy, and malice; the patron of impiety and vice.

'Nor is the case relieved by transferring the ultimate causation of defects, and crimes, and miseries, from the will of God to the will of men. For is not God the author of human wills? are they not momentarily supported by him, and does he not impart to them all their energies? How then can the human will be regarded as the *ultimate* source of crimes and woe, without implicating the Creator?'—'Those who commit crimes of the greatest magnitude, have wills, as effects of divine and sovereign bounty, as well as the most virtuous, and equal freedom on the part of God; but they are *deficient* as to a benevolent disposition, the love of good, a just estimate of consequences, real wisdom and

prudence. But is their deficiency the gift of God? Or is their will the cause of that which perverts it? In all unworthy deeds the free wills of men are perverted; but by what? not, surely, by the author and supporter of their wills. By what then? It cannot be by free will itself, except we can identify cause and effect. The truth is, that Equity leaves men possessed of all the defects they have, their negative principles and acquired habits; leaves them to walk in their own ways, permits them to plan, and often to execute, their own schemes, in private or in public, in their individual and associate capacities. In Equity they are accountable to the supreme Governor and Judge, while Sovereignty assigns them natural capacities, and providential means of exercising wisdom, that by real virtue they might obtain happiness.' — 'To conclude our present reflections; every created object, every providential event, every defect and excellency, all happiness and misery, are distributed by the hand of either Sovereignty or Equity; our good by the former, our evil of suffering by the latter;—while the evil of sin is of ourselves.' pp. 413—7.

From the wonders of creation and the mysteries of Providence, our attention is, in the second Section, turned to personal religion; and the 'genuine effects of an habitual, devout contemplation of Equity and Sovereignty,' are shewn in exciting holy love, filial fear, genuine humility, resignation, and gratitude; and in promoting the 'Christian's calm and settled enjoyments' in general.—Unless these passions and feelings are duly called into lively exercise, no man can be a consistent and happy disciple of Christ, or have well founded hopes of future felicity. Yet, before they can be genuine, there must be an apprehension of something in the object contemplated, calculated to inspire them. There must be a perception of loveliness, majesty softened by grace, greatness, wisdom united with undeviating rectitude, and beneficence; as the spring of that love, fear, humiliation, submission, and thankfulness: and the ardour of these emotions cannot be greater than the degree of confidence in the qualities on which they are founded. The doctrines inculcated in this Essay clearly display them, and, at the same time, disembarass the mind from false associations, too frequently cherished, which damp the fervour of devotion, and convert privilege into painful duty. It is scarcely possible to read this lovely exhibition of the divine character, without frequently stopping to indulge the sublime and devotional sentiments it awakens. Inferior objects are withdrawn; and the heart, melting at the presence of Deity, surrenders itself to the holy impulses, as, in turn, the parts of that character come within the sphere of contemplation. The glowing piety which directed the pen of the writer, kindles a similar flame in



our own breasts ; and we rise from the perusal of his reflections with the exquisite consciousness of having been at once instructed and improved ; of being better prepared, not only to withstand error, but to resist the influence of sin ; to engage in active duties ; to suffer, and to do, whatever our circumstances may demand. How lovely is religion, when divested of the frightful mask and gloomy attire in which ignorance and superstition have arrayed her, and beheld in the pure radiance of her own beauty !

Equity and Sovereignty, in section the third, are viewed in reference to several 'Theological Controversies.' 'A full examination of systems and subordinate disputed points, would not comport with the design of the work,' but we are informed in a note, that, had life and health been spared, it was the Doctor's intention 'to examine, in detail, a variety of theological sentiments in a separate form.' Who can restrain the sigh of regret that his design must now remain for ever unaccomplished ? Of what an able guide through a most intricate and dangerous road, has the traveller in search of truth been deprived by that lamented stroke,—a stroke which, while it has cut him off in the midst of many projected plans of useful labour, has deprived learning of one of its most successful votaries, religion of one of her best ornaments, and the church of a most accomplished and profound Divine ! But while we venerate the memory of talent so distinguished, and of worth so elevated, we would submissively bow to the decisions of infinite Wisdom and Equity. May the world long enjoy, and suitably prize, the fruits of his toil which yet remain, all consecrated to the best interests of mankind !

The controversies chiefly noticed in this place are,—those which 'have their origin in the different views taken of divine laws,'—and such as spring from the various opinions respecting human depravity. Among those who agitate questions founded on different views of *law*, are numbered,—the antinomian, the hyper-Calvinist, the neonomian, the antipedobaptist, and a certain class of *non-descripts*, who, to prevent circumlocution, and without intending to give offence, are named *contractionists*.—Each of these systems, is, in the opinion of our author, incompatible with one or both of the essential attributes of Deity, which together comprize the whole of those usually called moral, and which are principally considered in this work. On this part of the work, we must confine ourselves to a statement of the author's opinions. By 'the Contractionists' are intended such as 'contract and limit apostolic precepts and examples, by reducing them unjustifiably into *positive laws*.' Instead of distinguishing

between the spirit and design of the Gospel, which are immutable, and the precepts which arose from circumstances merely accidental, they lose sight of the former, by adhering to the latter. Those things which were then valuable only for the sake of a higher end, they now, when no longer conducive to any good result, magnify into an importance so great as to sacrifice to them the very end itself.

The controversies originating in different views of *human depravity* here noticed are those which are introduced by persons who regard human nature as *not at all* depraved, and others who regard it as partially so; in opposition to those who believe the defection to be total. As this last sentiment, however, has been greatly misrepresented and caricatured, an explanation was thought necessary, and it is included in the following particulars:

‘No one of the human race, as a natural descendant of the first man, is possessed of perfect righteousness and true holiness, such as Adam had before his transgression;’—‘the absence of this perfect righteousness is *total*, because there is no medium between perfection and the want of it;’—‘in this state of defect, which is a forfeiture in Equity, Sovereign efficacious influence is not included, for God’s work in forming Adam’s descendants may, without this, be perfect so far as it goes and, therefore, there is not *any* principle of real and absolute virtue in mankind, since the first forfeiture, except what is superinduced by Sovereign pleasure;’—‘in this condition of defect, and absence of real virtue, though one human being may be, through disobedience, farther gone from original righteousness than another, yet the deviation of all is *alike total* from the standard of rectitude and the principle of virtuous obedience;’—and ‘the will of man, in this destitute state, though allowed all conceivable freedom, has not the least tendency to remove that defect, which is here designated by a nature totally depraved; because every will is determined by the nature of the agent, and it is not the province of any nature to change itself. Whatever exhortations and requisitions in scripture carry that appearance, it is always implied that gracious assistance is to be sought and obtained for that purpose.’—‘Mankind, as descendants of Adam, are endowed with physical powers and capacities for performing moral obedience, and these are worthy of creating and providential power; but the possession of these cannot render any one happy, without moral conformity to God. Hence a plan of deliverance from this destitute condition, as it cannot proceed from divine Equity towards the human objects, must necessarily originate in Sovereign mercy. This plan is fully revealed in the Gospel, by a substitute, an atonement to justice, a perfect righteousness, and a fullness of grace.’ pp. 467—470.

The principles which are thus employed in unfolding the nature and causes of human depravity in general, the author also applies to the introduction of it by our first parents. As presenting a compressed view of his thoughts on this



subject; we have selected the following passage which occurs in this connexion.

‘It is allowed, on all hands, in the first instance, that Adam was created in God’s moral image, that is, “righteousness and true holiness,” which he possessed for a time;—and it is demonstrable that this continuance for a time was of sovereign favour, and not his claim in equity; otherwise this claim must have prevented his actual failure—that what was thus granted as a sovereign favour, might be discontinued without any injustice to Adam, provided those physical powers were continued which constitute a sufficient ground of moral obligation—that what he lost at the first step of his apostacy from rectitude, was efficacious influence to prevent him from yielding to temptation—that this efficacious influence was *not* afforded or given to him *when* he was *not hindered* from sinning: for efficacious prevention and permission are contradictory ideas—that God *could* have prevented his yielding to temptation, if that had been his sovereign pleasure—that man had in himself, as every creature necessarily and unavoidably must have, a root of mutability, which is also a root of all passive dependence, consisting in limitation as a negative principle—that his will was perfectly free from constraint to an evil choice, and from restraint respecting good—that God infused or communicated no darkness into his understanding, no depravity or defect of any kind into his disposition, that his will, however, was an active principle whose appropriate object is good, but *liable* to make a choice morally wrong, if not efficaciously prevented by sovereign interposition; otherwise he would have been without a cause of change, or absolutely immutable, which is absurd—that the moment he sinned, his moral integrity and purity were lost, which loss compared with the standard, must be deemed total—that it is absurd to suppose an obligation in equity to bestow on Adam’s posterity what he had lost, since it is not essential to human nature, nor a necessary basis of moral obligation.” pp. 471—473.

The fourth and last section contains “a view of Equity and Sovereignty in reference to moral science.” Had the life of the author been spared, the world would have been favoured with a complete treatise on this interesting subject, for we are informed, that “a separate work on moral science had long been in contemplation, and was in some forwardness for the press.” We lament this loss the more, as, notwithstanding much on this topic has already been written, and, in some respects, ably written, yet the imperfections apparent in every system hitherto offered to the public, render such a work still a desideratum; and, from the specimens now before us, we may infer, it would have been supplied very advantageously by our author. The points discussed, in a brief but masterly manner, in the section under examination, are, the notion of two eternal principles—the constitution of a moral system—the natures and essential differences of virtue and vice—

the doctrines of liberty and necessity,—that of moral obligation,—that of motives,—the source of evil,—how the prescience of it can accord with free will,—and how its existence may consist with the divine perfections. Some of these could only be just noticed, but the remarks, short as they were obliged to be, on moral obligation, exhibit an acuteness of discernment, a depth of thought, and a clearness of enunciation, which cast more light on that important doctrine than had been imparted by any preceding writer.

In presenting to our readers an analysis of the work before us, interspersed with a variety of quotations, we trust we have enabled them to form a pretty accurate judgement of its character for themselves. Yet, it must be remarked, that so numerous are the topics introduced, and so condensed the arguments in the discussion, that we have found it impossible to compress a full statement of its contents into the space assigned to this review. Enough has been done, however, to evince, that the publication of it must be considered as an event of high importance in the history of theological science. Its author was a man of uncommon powers of intellect, of various learning, of intense and unwearied application;—a man devoted to inquiry into the most recondite subjects connected with theology and morals; deeply read in polemics; of piety so warm and elevated, that the glow of religious feeling was not impaired either by the labours of thought, the distinctions of controversialists, or the subtleties of sceptical objections. Never, perhaps, were more duly regulated and harmoniously combined, speculation and practice, faith and reason, knowledge and devotion, the operations of the understanding and the emotions of the heart. His intellect was freed by calmness from embarrassment, his pen was guided by candour, and his animadversions were prompted by love of truth. From such a mind, much might be expected; and the public will acknowledge, that much has been performed.

To judge of the present work, we must consider the comprehensiveness of the design,—the number and magnitude of difficulties to be encountered,—the new light supplied, by which to surmount them,—the clear statement, lucid order, and interesting relations, in which truths before known have been exhibited,—the extensive application of principles,—its harmonizing and conciliatory tendency,—its accurate method,—its close ratiocination,—and, above all, its practical bearings, and the ardour of devotion which glows in every page.

We cannot but admire the power of simplification, which could comprize all the attributes of Deity related to a moral system, all the forms of divine administration, and the chief topics of divinity, under two heads of arrangement,



—“Equity of government, and Sovereignty of grace.” We also admire the strength and exactness of conception, which, by justness of definition, could subject so many important objects of thought, usually presented to view but as shadowy and indefinite forms, not only to inspection, but to the very grasp : and still more the vigour of understanding, which could apply principles, long before known, and yet but little regarded, to purposes so various, and in a manner so clear and satisfactory, as to solve many of the most difficult questions, and to throw new light, at least, on some of the most embarrassing subjects of controversy, both in the theory of revealed religion, and in the science of morals. Nor does the author answer individual objections merely ; he removes whole classes at once. He does not batter down a single citadel, but undermines the entire fortification. His principles are so extensive, that whosoever is furnished with them, is prepared, not only to contend against a repetition of former plots, but to anticipate and resist others hitherto unknown. He has written, not for those who are content to be sciolists, but for such as thirst for knowledge ; not to gratify for a leisure hour, but to assist the industrious inquirer ; not for his own times only, but for future ages. He was not satisfied with leaving the edifice of scientific theology, as before constructed, unimpaired ; but was desirous to carry on the building, and to consign it to posterity, improved in strength, proportion, and extent.

If it be inquired, how much this sacred structure has received from his skill and labour, and what yet remains to be accomplished before its completion ; we trust we may remark, that part of the question has already received a virtual reply, in the account now presented of the contents of this volume. To answer it fully, would require a comparison with former productions, too extended for this article ; but it may not be amiss to mention, expressly and together, a few particulars. Much has been improved, and much has been added. The orthodox system of truth has been freed from very burdensome and unlovely encumbrances. The doctrines of universal divine foreknowledge, and the predetermination of events, have been rescued from the charge of involving unlimited preordination, and an awful, merciless, reprobating decree. Whoever, henceforward, charges those who hold the principles of this essay, with these pernicious notions, must be accounted a public slanderer who attempts to vindicate himself by reviling his neighbour. Imputations on the scriptural account of the divine character, as if it included a prerogative injurious to the welfare, and therefore terrifying to the apprehensions, of his accountable creatures, have

been rescinded ; and the ways of God to men justified. There is nothing in the view of Deity here presented, but what is delightful to contemplate, except his justice, and that is hostile to none but the finally impenitent and unbelieving. The nature, grounds, and extent of divine government and of human responsibility, are more definitely ascertained, and more clearly stated ; the economy of divine grace is more fully explained, as to its source, its sphere of operation, and its final result ; and the mutual consistency, together with the discriminating distinctions, of both, exhibited. The doctrines of liberty and necessity, the fruitful occasion of so many controversies, have received additional illustration. That great medium of our restoration, the work of Christ, is unfolded with more precision, as the instrument of general legislation, the basis of universal reconciliation, of indefinite invitation and promise, and as possessing a sovereign specialty of design,—alike in its general and in its restricted aspects. The parts of Holy Scripture which require from man what they still represent as the gift of God, are harmonized in a manner more convincing and satisfactory, by being referred to settled and indubitable principles of interpretation. We are furnished with better means of distinguishing between true and erroneous interpretations of Holy Scripture, when those of irreconcilable meaning have equally professed to derive their support from the same divine source. The nature of original sin is more consistently and exactly considered, and the fact is freed from popular objections, and reconciled with divine Equity. The origin of evil, to investigate which had baffled all former attempts, is, as to its true cause, proved on incontestible principles, and by irrefragable argument. Its source is shewn to be exclusively in the creature, to arise from a property essential to every dependent moral agent,—a property which the Creator did not communicate, and the existence of which, if such agents were formed at all, it was not within the province of almighty power to prevent.

Of this demonstration, indeed, the ideas which form its basis were before found in the writings of several eminent Divines, particularly of those on the continent ; but more especially illustrated by the profound and elaborate WOLFIIUS. Yet the application of them has been carried to a far greater extent ; to such an extent as scarcely to leave any thing to be desired, and, certainly, little more likely to be accomplished. Perhaps the only difficulty on this subject, with which an inquiring and ingenuous mind will now feel itself pressed, is involved in the question, Why, knowing the future fall of Adam, if left to himself ; was certain, should Deity create him ; or, at least, place him in a state of probation ? To this interrogatory, a reply more satis-



factory, we are persuaded, is not to be found, than that contained in several parts of this work, and still more at large, in President EDWARDS's "Dissertation concerning the End for which God created the world." Some indeed have, inconsiderately, objected against the principles illustrated in this work, that they *do* render the event of trial infallible. Yet it is obvious, that the cause of defection would be but imperfectly explained, if it did not involve that consequence. The fact, if certainly foreknown, must have had an indubitable ground of prescience, and, therefore, must have been quite beyond the sphere of contingency. To shew how chance was excluded, and yet, that the source of certainty arose not from any divine determination, was the very object to be accomplished. In our opinion, this has been completely effected, and by arguments as well arranged and as perspicuously expressed, as they are strong and convincing.

In this valuable work, indeed, we find no loose declamation; no efforts to conceal objections, or to escape them by skimming over the surface of things; every point is fully met, and fairly discussed. The author aims throughout, not to silence, but to convince; not to establish facts, but to trace causes and exhibit reasons;—not to force upon the mind a reluctant assent, but to remove its inward doubts and satisfy its secret wishes. While many are content with asking the *what*, he is desirous to shew the *why*. Others repel the attacks of sceptics and infidels by authority; he, by arguments: they furnish their disciples with shields and bucklers; he teaches them to disarm their antagonists.

On many accounts, we consider the work before us, as an invaluable addition to the public stores of theological learning; nor do we know, when one of equal importance for the defence of truth, has issued from the press. There may be persons too busy, or too indolent, to consider its principles, or to make themselves masters of its arguments; there may be others who will dispute some of its statements, and reject some of its conclusions; but no man is entitled to think himself acquainted with the present state of theological science, who has not given it an attentive and candid perusal.

It is proper to notice, that we have referred, throughout, to the second edition, which, though not containing the examination of WHITBY and FLETCHER, nor the more 'abstruse parts contained in the Notes and Illustrations,' is, in many respects, greatly superior. The general arrangement is more accurate; the bearing of every part upon the professed design, more direct; and the style of composition, 'more accommodated to the public ear.' Terms that were thought too technical, are omitted; and

a higher polish is given to almost every sentence. One section of considerable length is entirely new matter, and the whole (except the last six pages, at the commencement of which, death interrupted him,) was re-written by the author. The public, therefore, are now presented with a volume, not inferior to any, perhaps, on similar subjects in elegance, precision, vigour, and perspicuity of expression; and which displays argumentative ability in no respect exceeded by either BARROW, BUTLER, or CLARKE.

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Art. II. *Poetics*: Or, a Series of Poems, and Disquisitions on Poetry. By George Dyer, formerly of Emanuel College, Cambridge. 12mo. 2 vols. pp. 480. Price 14s. Johnson and Co. 1812.

**MR. DYER** may now be regarded as one of the veteran corps of our literary workmen. This circumstance combines with the benevolence of his dispositions, the good intention of his writings, and the useful practical tendency of some of them, his indefatigable literary industry, his extensive and various knowledge, and even the tone, genuine and not extravagantly enthusiastic, of his passion for poetry, to draw from candid readers and critics, something more friendly than the precise sentence of parsimonious justice. The present work is distinguished by an additional circumstance of recommendation, in being constructed on a principle, and with an express avowal, of willingness to consign the greater part of the author's former poetical works to oblivion. He has here selected from them and corrected, a certain portion to which he could wish a more protracted existence; and adding a considerable number of pieces that have not appeared before, with a set of prose essays, partly original and partly reprinted, he sends out this assortment of rescued parts instead of new whole editions, to occupy in smaller bulk, the place of works never to be recalled.

It is not usual for authors to perform, of choice, and thus calmly, the exequies of a part of their own literary offspring. In general, they affectionately, it is believed, wish at least all their finished productions a life co-extended with their own; indeed wish them life indefinitely, and would be highly gratified by the thought of their being much in request, and consulted, and admired, after themselves that gave them being, shall have withdrawn from the world: as if they expected to retain, amidst the wonders and the solemnities of the new economy of existence into which they are to be removed, some vital sympathy with this beloved progeny in verse and prose.

It might, to be sure, seem to be among the most obvious of all admonitions to the vanity of authors, that there have been a



vast number of their profession in each of the past ages, and yet, that but few books of those ages are now read : that the present age has a greater number of authors than the preceding ones, and that the next will, probably, see a greater number than this : that, therefore, each future generation of readers will have still less and less time to look back to the works of the preceding periods, and, consequently, the measure of probability for each author, that his works, and especially that all his works, will be read by the subsequent generation, is lessening at every step in the progress of time. All this would seem sufficiently easy of apprehension ; but since authors are so reluctant to acknowledge it in application each to himself, we deem particular praise to be due to one, whose acknowledgement of it is so real and effectual, as to determine the form of a present literary undertaking.

A very long preface, for the necessary egotism of which the author repeatedly, and somewhat solicitously apologizes, states the origin and plan of the work, the first half only of which is here published ; two additional volumes being to be prepared after he shall have completed the History of the University of Cambridge, on which he is now employed. The first two volumes, he says, 'are not necessarily connected with what are to follow, though the completion of his design into a sort of systematic work, will not be realized till the publication of the two other volumes.' Some of his friends had often suggested to him, that a work of considerable amusement and interest, might be produced by throwing the varieties of his literary life into the form of a history, with observations. He thought this would be a more formal and pretending sort of undertaking than the subject would warrant. His friends, however, retained their opinion, and repeated their representations, till, at last, he was led to think of a compromise. He thought that a selection from his former poetical publications, and from a great variety of pieces never printed, accompanied by a series of essays, might be made according to such a rule of preference and arrangement, as to correspond to, and, in some measure, represent, the progress of his life, marking the series of its interests and occupations, and giving some trace of the circumstances and changes of local situation.

There is a certain agreeable vivacity, and what is called naïveté, in this rather rambling introduction ; and it concludes with a very unequivocal avowal, (and we have noticed several other passages that confirm it) of the grand tenet of our author's philosophical faith.

'As I set off with pleasing recollections, I shall close with a consolatory reflection; which is, that human life, through all its inquiries, affectations, and pursuits, is a course of habits, a succession of circumstances, a system of causes and effects, which we cannot foresee, and which we cannot displace; nice links of a mysterious chain, parts of a great universe, natural, regular, irresistible, indissoluble, not independent of power, but leading up to a Power that is incomprehensible, The Power of Deity, the utmost point to which religion or philosophy can reach. This reflection, and I would impress the reader as well as myself, should awaken a feeling of quiet magnanimity, which, while it overpowers our weaknesses, and moderates our despondencies, should create, if not a total indifference, a calm endurance, to the praise or censure of beings,—if we fall in the way of either,—who are altogether constituted as we are, the creatures of circumstances, like as ourselves.'

If any reader, observant of the nicer, but, nevertheless, important matters of propriety in composition, should be led, by the clumsy cast of the concluding part of the passage, to expect a good deal of unfinished, negligent expression, a sometimes almost slovenly incorrectness, very hard to be tolerated in any man who writes for the press, but quite inexcusable in a scholar, and an old craftsman in authorship,—he will not be deceived in his anticipation.

In our brief notice, the second volume, consisting of prose essays, seems to claim the precedence, on account of its ostensible character of research and disquisition.—The first Chapter is on 'The connection and mutual assistance of the arts and sciences, and the relation of Poetry to them all.' It begins with a profusion and splendour of classical allusions; but we confess we felt no small discouragement, when we came to the paragraph which appeared more strictly to be the commencement of the intended elucidation.

'Mind is the source and the seat of knowledge, as the sun is of light; and all the discoveries of science reflect back pleasure on the mind; all the congregated rays mingling, as it were, and sympathizing with each other and our common natures, in the same manner as the planets, which revolve round the sun, and administer to his glory; or, as the whole heavens and earth are cheered by the light of the moon, according to those inimitable lines of Homer, so finely paraphrased by Pope:—

'As when the moon, refulgent lamp of night,' &c.

Why, we thought to ourselves, would a sensible man, who has undertaken the business of unfolding a matter to the understanding, in the light, as might be expected, of clear intelligence, make his commencement with this sort of impertinent show and confusion of phosphoric fires? Why would he mock, with this unmeaning imagery, this mixture of the dazzling and the cloudy,



the mental eye that is expecting some defined form of sense? The chapter does, nevertheless, afford an agreeable, though quite immethodical view of the wide capacities and affinities of poetry. It was conformable with the general design of the work, that these deeply inherent relations, which constitute the union of all sciences, and the arts resulting from them, in a grand intellectual system, should be but very briefly illustrated; while the sovereign right which poetry has asserted, and practically maintained, to invade what might have seemed the sacredly peculiar property of each of them, and seize something there for her own, is dwelt on with the amplification of triumph. This noble arrogance of poetry, thus asserting her relationship to all the arts and sciences in the way of compelling them to pay her tribute, is described by our author, not so much in a philosophical as in a popular manner. He celebrates the fact as exemplified in Homer, Spenser, Milton, Butler, and many other great poets. Even Shakespeare, not a man of science, nor, in the usual sense of the word, of learning, is justly maintained to be one of the examples, inasmuch as the very considerable historical and general knowledge which he possessed, all finds its use in his poetry; which would, doubtless, as happily have availed itself of all the knowledge of Bacon, had the poet possessed it.—The great lesson inculcated by the whole discourse, though obvious, cannot be too often inculcated,—that a poet will, in that capacity, derive benefit from all the knowledge he can acquire, and that an *ignorant great poet* is the most perfect absurdity of which it is possible to dream.

The notion that genius is not to be subjected, in its operations, to rules, we should have thought, had been by this time, too effectually exploded, to require any further expense of argument. The chapter on this subject is, however, sensible and spirited, though without any remarkable novelty.

The next three chapters are employed on the matter of fact, that there are but few excellent poets, and on the question,—‘Why are there so few?’ There is, first, a brief historical view of the early and progressive cultivation of poetry, as a favourite employment in various parts of the world, tending to shew what an immense number of poets there have been in all; and, therefore, if we have but a diminutive list of excellent ones, of what arduous ascent that eminence must be, where the *monumentum ære perennius* can be erected.

In adverting to the influence of climate, our author appears to us, to fall into a very palpable contradiction; the paragraph in which he says, ‘In the coldest regions of the north, clouds hang over the mind, and *torpor freezes the imagination*,’ ends thus—

'The loftiness of the mountains, the violence of the winds, the terror of the thunders, the severity of the frosts, the inscrutable depth of the shores, the dreadful noises of the caverns, fill the mind with horror, and generate credulity and superstition. Hence the Norway monsters, the Lapland witches, the fairies, the giants, the dæmons of the North,' p. 53.

It is natural enough to wonder why the great poets have been so few, since the taste for poetry has been universal, and the number so vast of persons, who have earnestly addicted themselves to its composition, with passionate wishes, and even sanguine hopes, for eternal fame.

'What is more generally attempted than poetry? What pursuit more intimately allied to our feelings, more expressive of our natural passions? more conversant in common life and general manners? What more immediately addresses those natural passions? What more excites those smaller and larger vibrations which make all mankind feel? What, therefore, at first sight, so easy to common apprehension? Let it be added, too, that nothing is more remote from the technicisms of art, the scholastic jargon of language, the subtleties and scepticism of disquisition, the logomachy, the obscurity of learning, than poetry. And, with respect to what is properly called its mechanical part,—I mean the business of versification,—it is considered by many so easy of structure, that in this the most ordinary genius may, without much difficulty, become a ready-handed builder, a professional adept.'

'Is the excellence of poetry as accessible as that of the other arts and sciences? It is generally, and I think justly said, It is not. What then are the difficulties which lie in the way? What the dragons which thus guard the golden fruit?'

The long chapter which appears to pledge itself, by its title, to answer these last questions, is a piece of utter trifling, a farrago of unconnected fancies, facts, and observations, which will leave the reader's mind in so perfect a confusion, that he will not know how to avail himself, to any purpose, of here and there a passage, that does seem to be pertinent to any proposed subject. A most unconscionable portion of space is occupied with quoted testimonies and grave remarks about the idle conceit of the ancients, that poets are divinely inspired. How could it be worth while for a writer, assuming the office of a modern critic or philosopher, to expend three sentences on such a vanity? But the fancy is formally dwelt upon, and displayed in this light and in that light, as if there might after all be something in it: as if, at least, it ought to be carefully placed and numbered among those matters which philosophy will have to bring under another scrutiny, before she finally determines her theories. Modernize, however, this



notion a little, and it will not be quite so ambitious a one as it seems to be at the first hearing of it; since the medium of this same celestial inspiration, if not its very essence, may be no other than —electricity. For, 'I see nothing absurd,' our author says, 'in supposing that genius is the effect of some electrical principle.' And in order to give a certain port and dignity to the idea, (which he takes care to mark as his own) he goes on to observe, in lofty style and apocryphal philosophy, that, 'The electric matter, that great fifth element, affects all nature; it glitters in the meteor, flashes in the lightning, rolls in the thunder, and in the bowels of the earth excites all those mighty commotions which shake and overturn vast districts,' &c. &c. He consistently ends the paragraph with a respectful reference to the explanation of the nature of the intellectual faculties in the notorious *Système de la Nature*.

There are just observations on the malignant influence of despotism on poetical genius; and some not very intelligible assertions relative to the creative power of *circumstances*; as, for instance, 'It may safely be said, that a powerful imagination is formed by circumstances, as well as every thing else,' p. 72.

The next subject of inquiry, is, the primary and ultimate end of poetry. Its primary or immediate end, is to 'please and elevate;' and this being predicated, without any hazard of contradiction, the author goes into a train of observations on the theories and opinions concerning poetry, of Aristotle, Theophrastus, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Longinus, Plutarch, and Plato. These observations run on agreeably, in a lively style, with an unaffected appearance of easy familiarity with these ancient doctors; but they are extremely desultory, uncertain, and indirect in their bearing, and so, but little conducive to any specific purpose of proof or illustration.

The latter and larger division of this disquisition, is conducted in so discursive and disorderly a way, that we cannot, with confidence, assign its precise object. Its general appearance is that of a learned pleading in justification of poetry for employing fiction. Perhaps the main purpose is still no more than to maintain and illustrate the principle or position, that the immediate object of poetry is to please; on which point, if any one has continued sceptical, in despite of the loads of paper that have been wasted on the frivolous topic, it would have been perfectly just to abandon him to the consequences of his obdurate perverseness. A hopeful and prosperous concern is that of the philosophy of criticism, if we are not yet advanced beyond the necessity of debating whether fiction is among the legitimate resources of poetry, and whether poetry must adapt

itself, at all events, to please, whatever further effect it may intend.

A number of agreeable fancies, classical, poetical, philosophical, do indeed, at our author's incantation, make their appearance, even on this tract of common-place; but they seem to dance about in confusion so capricious, that we are detained only to be bewildered between the feeling, that surely it *should* be some unprofaned and spirit-haunted ground that we are got upon, and the still returning consciousness, that we are not really beholding any steadfast shapes of light, not really receiving any illapses of original truth.

The chapter 'On the use of topography in poetry,' begins with a lively and pleasing description of some of our author's own habits.

'If there are any topics, in which I conceive myself to have been romantic in the different periods of my life, it is on such as belong to the subject of the present Essay. I have indeed never been out of the island; but within it I have been romantic enough. And were I to relate how I have expatiated over its plains and heaths, lingered in its gardens, lost myself, sometimes too literally, in its wildernesses and woods, coursed its lakes and rivers, ranged its valleys, scaled its mountains, and pierced some of its most fantastic, sequestered haunts,—how I have travelled miles and miles to gaze at an old castle in ruins, grotesque, disrupted rocks, a gentle waterfall, or a foaming cascade,—how I have searched out some of its most secluded bays, many of its boldest shores, mused, and contemplated the ocean from those points of view where it appears most awful and sublime;—were I to relate these matters, the reader might think I have been sufficiently romantic; and that he who is said to have travelled to Egypt to measure the height of the Pyramids, and to ascertain whether there were to be traced on them any hieroglyphical characters, was not more romantic than myself.'

'This feeling amounting to a passion, has been connected with a correspondent course of rambling reading—I mean of writers on landscape, picturesque, or English gardening, and on painting; and all this to find out the BEAUTIFUL.' p. 112.

The essayist first endeavours to define the essential properties of descriptive poetry, considered, not in that specific and almost exclusive form in which it is exemplified in Thomson's *Seasons*, &c., but rather as an element of general poetry. He then describes the kind of topographical writing, which will be of the greatest service to the poet, shews how it will aid him, and ends with a warm eulogium of the beauties of Monmouthshire.

We have, next, an essay on Mythology, the object of which is, as appears toward the latter end of it, to admonish poets, that however similar or common the origin may have been, of the mythologies of the different tribes and countries of



the earth, and whatever analogies they may, amidst all their diversity, still have to one another, they are, nevertheless, when contemplated for practical purposes, to be held as quite distinct, and that the poet must not blend together the peculiar personages or images of several of them; neither may he make use of any one mythology but that received among the people for whom he writes——excepting in sundry licensed cases thus specified in the *æet*.

‘But he may use them in his own person, though he does not believe them, nor describe them conformably to public opinion, where he speaks merely in a way of allusion, or simile, or under the form of a vision; or in a dramatic representation, where the language is agreeable to the character represented; or where the writer, throwing himself into other countries and other times, appears himself in an assumed representative character.’

Taking mythology as synonymous with false religion,\* there would be a much readier way of getting rid of all difficulties, distinctions, and exceptions about the matter; that is, to proscribe it altogether; committing Poetry to the fearful venture of life or death. Even let her die, if she cannot live without the company of pagan gods and goddesses. Let her pine and expire, if she cannot sustain Daniel’s experiment of abstinence from the wine of the idolaters. It must be quite certain, that if poetry cannot do without irreligion, mankind can do without poetry. That it is not less than irreligion, to labour to render objects of heathen worship attractive or commanding, by investing them with beauty or sublimity, is not, we should think, a point to be argued and proved, to any man who believes the Bible.

Our author, in the sort of historical and philosophical review of mythology, which constitutes so large a portion of this essay, is, we think, beguiled by the delights of classical associations, into a tone of feeling much too pacific towards the pernicious,—and the more pernicious for being elegant and poetical,—delusions that have imposed themselves on the human mind in the stead of the authentic religion. Witness the complacent strain of such observations as the following.

‘But be the ancient mythology what it may, it threw open those vast, those boundless regions, so soothing to human expectancy, so favourable to poetic imagination,—regions inhabited

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\* Mr. Dyer, however, employs the term in a sense comprehending a wider extent of fable.

by gods, goddesses, dæmons, heroes; by genii, nymphs, and deified passions.'—'These fables, though in their course they might carry along with them some muddy streams, were perhaps pure in their source, simple and innocent in their tendencies. They seem at least to have suited man in a particular age, and under a particular climate, prone as he was to credulity, and fond of the marvellous. Through the instrumentality of the personages of whom such histories treat, human affairs moved in a wider circumference,—all nature experienced a metamorphosis,—and the most ordinary concerns of life wore an air of majesty,—and what would otherwise have been clogged with flesh and sense, moved with the celerity of thought.' p. 132.

Were this reduced to plain terms, what would it be less than a felicitation of the deluded, miserable devotees of polytheism?—As to 'these fables' having 'suited man in a particular age, and under a particular climate,' if it mean that they were *agreeable to his taste*, the observation is a truism: but if it mean that they were *adapted to be beneficial* to him, we must really inquire, what condition the mind of man is assumed to be in under *this* climate, and in *this* age, by a writer who can reckon, with an appearance of easy confidence, on its assent to such a doctrine as the utility of error,—the beneficial influence of a vast system of fallacies, which had its mightiest efficacy in exactly that one direction in which its operation could do the most fatal mischief,—in the extirpation of all true religion!

In the subsequent chapter, written in an animated style, our author seems for a while more than half disposed to the sweeping of all the mythologies into Chaos together, that they may be out of the reach of all present and all future poets—all save one, from the 'crude consistence' of whose mental being, it may easily be believed, he would be so perfectly *at home* in that region of *caput mortuum* and confusion, that nothing cast thither would, therefore, be out of *his* reach. We allude to a certain English Platonist, who is here mentioned as a perfectly serious and devout hymn-maker to the pagan gods. In him, as Mr. Dyer observes, it is quite consistent to retain, and chant, and glorify, in his poetry, the whole 'rabble rout' of the classical mythology. The consistency of fatuity, however, scarcely merited to be acknowledged in the tone of respect, with which the personage in question is several times adverted to.

In the place of mythology, it is recommended by our author, that poets shall have recourse to Personification, a figure of infinite capabilities. The poet may thus create his own world of ideal agents. The examples of Spenser, Gray, and Collins,



are brought in evidence of the immense advantages comprehended in this legitimate resource of poetry. But innumerable occasions must have occurred to our author, for observing the gross and incessant abuses to which it is liable, from being so completely accessible to every manner of thing, that chooses to constitute itself a poet. The most unadroit of the whole tribe can here play the magician with the best of them. He can instantly cause his virtue, or vice, or passion, or operation, or abstraction, to assume a personal form, with whatever personal attributes he pleases. He calls it He or She, puts it in action, and is alternately delighted and amazed at the power of his own creative genius,—for what was, but a few moments since, nothing more than a thought, is now an animated, thinking, acting being, with transcendent powers of mind, and beauty, grandeur, or perhaps terribleness of form. This he must needs think a marvellous fine thing to do; and when it is also matter of easier achievement than to make a doll of wax, it is certain to be done with the most prolific diligence. And the forms of thought thus witched into persons, just because the composition *shall* absolutely be fine poetry, will bear about the same proportion of grace and dignity to the genuine Personifications of genius, that the pottery deities hawked about among the Hindoos bear to the mythological sculptures of the temples of Greece. Some of even our real and respectable poets, have been seduced into great excess of the facility and *speciosa miracula* of this trick of metamorphosis. It would therefore have been a valuable service to literature, if Mr. Dyer had laid down some rational and decisive rules, to distinguish between truly poetical and merely mechanical personification, with illustrative and contrasted examples of both. He has, with correct taste and warm feeling, noted one brief example.

‘A single word, under this figure, often supplies the place of a whole page of circumstances, and renders unnecessary all the apparatus of machinery. It is a species of sublime short-hand. Thus how concise, yet how comprehensive, is that description of a Jewish prophet! “Before Him (Jehovah) went the PESTILENCE.” Heb. iii. 5. A thousand terrible circumstances might have entered into the description. But how does one word fill the soul with all that is dreadful.’ p. 151.

There are two chapters on Medals, which seem to shew that the writer has given considerable attention to the subject, and which, in an author of a more designing character, we might have almost suspected to have been introduced for that very purpose; his observations being so much more expended on the subject itself, as a matter of antiquarian

knowledge, than on the nature and possible advantages of its relation to poetry.

A chapter on painting and engraving, asserts, with strong and just emphasis, that most valuable aid may be derived from the productions of these arts, to the imagination of the poet. The author may be regarded as expressing to them, in the name and on the behalf of this fraternity, the merited acknowledgement and gratitude. And in doing it, he manages with dexterity, to obviate any sentiment of undervaluation with which it might be a little apprehended, that the professors of those arts would receive the tribute of the tuneful choir. He avoids the airs of the high connoisseur, confesses that there are even some refinements in those enchanting arts, of which only artists themselves can be fully sensible; but insists, with becoming spirit, that the primary merits of their works cannot be too subtle for the perceptions of men of taste and imagination, who have observed nature and investigated the principles of beauty, though they are neither artists nor regularly schooled cognoscenti; though they have not 'examined the divine Raphael's paintings in the Vatican, nor Michael Angelo's sublime figures in the Sistine chapel;' though they have had but very scanty opportunities of 'dwelling on the grace and harmony of Correggio, the natural, living colours of Titian, the wild, astonishing, yet classical scenery of Salvator Rosa, the glowing, melting landscapes of Claude, the grandeur and magnificence of Rubens.'

The chapter on music is of uncertain tenour and desultory composition. If there be a distinguishable doctrine or principle in it, it is, that the relation between music and poetry is that of analogy only, and not of direct resemblance.

It is such a relation as there is between reasoning and seeing, rather than as that between a substantial form and its shadow, or between a voice and its echo. The author adverts to the speculations of several ingenious writers on the nature of the relation; illustrates slightly and loosely, the intimate practical connexion of the two arts in ancient times; hints at one or two points, in which the analogy between them is the most perceptible; and seems to conclude, (while expressing, nevertheless, a strong sense of the powers and charms of music) that, now and henceforward, at least in England, poetry has but little effectual aid to expect from the relationship.

'Poetry, then, can give to music sentiment and passion: music to poetry, sound and melody. This was more obviously the case, where poetry and music united their operations, and the musician and the poet were the same man. But where this union



is in some measure dissolved, there the services are not so distinctly seen; and, in England, the poetry which cannot support itself without the assistance of music, we may assure ourselves will not stand long.'

In the concluding chapter, on 'Physics, Metaphysics, Theology, Politics,' &c. the author seeks his way to his chosen subject of poetry by a very wide-flying excursion along some of the confines of general philosophy; on the profundity, comprehensiveness, variety, and imperfection of which he descants, with much of the scholastic diction and allusion with which he is unaffectedly familiar. He again strongly represents to the poet, (as he did in some of the earliest pages of the volume) that all the acquisitions he can make, from all the regions of science, will infallibly augment his power and wealth in his peculiar province: while he is duly apprized, nevertheless, that poetry would utterly ruin itself by any attempt to assume a strictly scientific form; it being extremely difficult to treat, in successful poetry, even those subjects in philosophy which allow a much less rigorous mode of speculation than that indispensable to what is justly termed science. The splendid success of Lucretius, instead of being promoted by any friendly aid of his subject, was gained in victorious triumph over its repugnant nature.

'The philosophy is of vast compass; but the workings of a powerful imagination, the grand imagery, the vivid descriptions, with an energetic command of numbers, give that poem a character highly poetical. Without these essential qualities, all his metaphysics, and his atoms, and his philosophical necessity, whether true or false, would have been long since either quite forgotten, or have been only read with the coolest, most grammatical indifference.'

It might be a curious exercise on the scale of degrees between the *maximum* and *minimum* of poetical quality, if a man could have the opportunity of a parallel reading, if we may so term it, of Lucretius and two or three delectable works mentioned by Mr. Dyer.

'Some one has ventured to put Grotius *de veritate* (the first book of which is nearly as mathematical as Clarke's Attributes) into verse. I think too I have heard, (for I have never seen the book) that another has undertaken to hook Euclid into rhyme; and that in Lincoln's Inn Library there is a curiosity entitled Coke's Institutes, in verse. But commend me to Jerome Boyd of Glasgow, who many years ago *did* into verse the whole scriptures, so wretchedly, so mechanically, as if, though a very serious, religious man, he meant to throw both Old and New Testament into ridicule and burlesque.—This singularity lies in manuscript in the library of the University of Glasgow.'

The concluding pages attempt to mark the line of separation between poetry and philosophy; and warn poetry not to suffer distinctness and independence of character to be merged in the alliance: they also explain how the author was led into the design which he has thus far accomplished, and what disquisitions are in reserve for the latter portion.

It would be somewhat difficult to form a fair general estimate of this course of essays. They display a mind of extensive inquisitiveness and information. The author's decided preference for poetry, does not in the least disable him from feeling the value and attractions of any other of the numerous divisions of literature: he is interested by them all, and his taste with respect to each, we should deem, speaking generally, correct and liberal. There is certainly a considerable diffusion of just critical thought and sentiment through the work: there is an easy, unostentatious sort of ingress and egress among the schools of ancient literature and philosophy; there is an ingenuous, but rather gossipping vivacity; and the diction, sometimes, as we have already observed, most culpably careless, ill-constructed, and feeble, is, withal, very free and unaffected, sometimes spirited and even elegant. Regarding the work, however, as what ought to have been a regular course of instruction, directed towards one main object, we cannot but think it very seriously fails. It conduces, much less than so much writing ought to have done, to the accomplishment of a given purpose. Passing on through a numerous series of topics, it does not confine itself to take such views of them as to carry on the specific business; but spreads loosely out into unpardonable vagueness. There is, therefore, a total want of regular progression, and of the method that might conduce to it. And in particular parts, the successive paragraphs and sentences often appear to follow one another without any clear, intellectual, guiding principle, to give them the character and virtue of connected thinking.

The length to which the preceding observations on the prose division of the work have been protracted, will suffice to prove, that it can be from no indisposition to give it the fullest attention in every part, that our notice of the poetical half is extremely brief.—It consists, with two or three exceptions, of short pieces; and they are all denominated Odes. The subjects, many of them casually suggested, are of all kinds, lofty and trifling, grave and brisk; and the verse is of all measures and stanzas. This diversity of structure is not a mere contrivance to give an impression of the versatility of the author's poetical faculty: his strain of thinking and his mode of feeling, have, at least, the variety of turning on very different subjects, and of being really interested by each of them.



It will be among the first things that strike the reader, that the author has an extensive command of poetical diction. And it is not merely the diction which any one, so disposed, might soon acquire from familiarity with our own and the ancient classic poets ; it has enough of native infusion, and of uncertain modulation, to constitute it the author's own ; while it bears, nevertheless, a predominantly classical cast, and has more resemblance, in the pieces of higher aim, to the style of Gray or Collins, than to that of Cowper or Crabbe. Though of this more ambitious school, it is not elaborated to stiffness, nor strained to bombast. It oftener errs in the way of prosaic negligence.

The reader will perceive a deficiency of the higher attributes of poetic genius ; the energy, the originality, the power of making ideas start forth like substances. There is no want of ideas, in number and variety ; the author's mind is amply stored with them ; but they are not forcibly, and, if we may so speak, individually, conceived. They seem as if spread out on a wide flat, where they are indeed many and various, but they are presented in such a sameness of view, that nothing strongly seizes the imagination ; nothing rises into boldness, or descends into profundity, or retires into mysterious shade. If it is true, that there are many ideas of a magnificent order, they are forms rather of a large bulk, than of sublime colossal contour and of majestic physiognomy. This is, in a considerable degree, the character of the first ode, entitled ' Visions,' one of the two or three longest in the volume. It displays, in a succession of imaginary pageants, the principal mythologies of the world. It evinces extensive knowledge, and has a certain kind of splendour in its changing scenes, and paraded gods ; but it quite fails to enchant the imagination,—which, in a moral view of the case, is, to be sure, just as it should be ; but thus to fail is not a *poetic* merit. There is a multitude of supernatural personages, in appropriate costume and action, with characteristic symbols, amidst a whole scenery designed to give them effect ; but in vain they look fair, or frightful, or grand ; in vain are they surrounded with the pomp of strange rites, and attended by their train of earthly or unearthly ministers ; in vain do they seem to make a commotion of all the elements as they pass ; we stand all the while as unconcerned spectators of an idle and unimposing show.

The Ode inscribed in a blank page of *Paradise Lost*, has the same uncommanding semblance of greatness ; and we are fearful that this inefficiency will be found in the greater part of the more elevated class of the compositions. They appear to contain, in parts, a portion of the crude element, if we may so denominate it, of sublimity ; but there is not the energy

requisite to *form* it sublimely, and it is confounded with a great deal of inferior matter. For poetical common-place certainly constitutes too large a proportion of our author's composition; and its unfavourable effect is, naturally, most felt in the pieces which aim at the higher region of poetry. This region is, indeed, now and then attained for a moment by our author's muse, but it is not her appropriate dwelling-place.

He succeeds much better, we think, in the strains of a less aspiring character, on the amusing incidents of life, on occasions exciting the complacent affections, on the remembrances of friendship, and especially on pensive retrospections and anticipations. The thoughtful reader cannot fail to be very sensibly touched by some pieces and passages of this last quality. Nothing had so strongly interested us in all the preceding pages as the stanza in page 29., in an Ode on the approach of Spring,—against the third line of which stanza, however, there lies a very plain exception.

‘ Yet I, who hail thy gentle reign,  
 Soon must leave thee, gentle Spring,  
 What time fate's high decrees ordain,  
 Or wills the Sovereign King.  
 Yes! all which charms at morn, of orient light,  
 And all which soothes of eve's soft-setting ray,  
 Thy gales, and songs, and rills, and flowers so bright,  
 All that can warm the heart, or gild the day;  
 All must be follow'd by funereal gloom,  
 And man, frail man, at length sink silent in the tomb:  
 But though I love thee, Spring so fair,  
 If there's one more fair above,' &c. Vol. I.

This will remind the reader of some of the most interesting passages in the *Minstrel*.—There is something pleasing, and classical, and truly scholar-like, in the author's many allusions to the *Cam*, and the other objects and circumstances connected with his *Alma Mater*, to whom, nevertheless, he acknowledges he has not been the most dutiful of sons. We are confident the large work he is now engaged in will make her ample atonement.



Art. III. *A Sketch of the History and Proceedings of the Deputies appointed to protect the Civil Rights of the Protestant Dissenters :* To which is annexed, a Summary of the Laws affecting Protestant Dissenters. With an Appendix of Statutes and Precedents of Legal Instruments. 12mo. pp. vii. 327. Price 5s. S. Burton ; and Conder. London. 1814.

Art. IV. *The Quarterly Review* for October 1813.—Art. HISTORY OF DISSENTERS.

THE first of these articles is a highly interesting and important work, which, in our opinion, not only Dissenting Ministers, but Clergymen and Magistrates, ought individually to possess : for, as there are persons belonging to the first of these classes, who have *suffered wrong* in consequence of not having known how to defend themselves, or where to seek redress ; so there are persons belonging to the other two classes, who have *done wrong* from pure ignorance or mistake, while they were anxious to avoid it, and to do only what was strictly just. The ‘ Sketch ’ before us has this circumstance of particular recommendation, that while it conveys essential information to all who prize religious liberty as an important means for the accomplishment of a more important end, it shews what it is in the power of discreet and intelligent men, by a persevering and steady attention to one object, and a “ patient continuance in well-doing,” to effect ; though their official existence and successful endeavours may be unknown to the greater part of the busy world.

There are many, even among the Dissenters, who know not that, during a period of seventy years, a society of gentlemen has met from time to time, to receive accounts of all attempts to abridge liberty of conscience, to disturb religious worship, to deprive Nonconformists of their recognized privileges, and also to search out and apply proper remedies, as well as to devise plans for a farther extension of religious toleration, and to confer with statesmen, and other public characters, whose liberal sentiments promised a favourable co-operation, in advancing so desirable a measure.

This society has, however, existed, during this long period, and though its operations have been silent, they have been effectual. Thousands, who are at this moment ignorant of its existence, are enjoying the blessings which have been procured in a great measure through its instrumentality. From this body of men we receive an authorized volume with peculiar pleasure, and under a full persuasion that, whatever may be imputed to them, they cannot be accused of prematurely thrusting themselves upon public notice.

‘ The annual appointment of DEPUTIES by the several congregations of Presbyterians, Independents, and Baptists, in and within ten

miles of London, to protect the Civil Rights of the Protestant Dissenters, originated in the following manner.

‘ On the 9th of November, 1732, a general meeting of Protestant Dissenters was held, at the meeting-house in Silver-street, London, to consider of an application to the legislature for the repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts. At this meeting a Committee of twenty-one persons was appointed, to consider, and report to a subsequent meeting, when, and in what manner, it would be proper to make the application. Another general meeting being held on the 29th of the same month, the Committee reported, that they had consulted many persons of consequence in the state; that they found every reason to believe such an application would not then be successful; and therefore could not think it advisable to make the attempt. This report was not very cordially received. The Committee was enlarged by the addition of four other gentlemen, and instructed to reconsider the subject. It was at the same time resolved, that every congregation of the three denominations of Protestant Dissenters, Presbyterians, Independents, and Baptists, in and within ten miles of London, should be recommended to appoint two Deputies; and to a general assembly of these Deputies, the Committee were instructed to make their report. An assembly of Deputies thus appointed, was accordingly held on the 29th of December; and the Committee, after mature deliberation, were obliged to make a report very similar to the former. The object, however, was not abandoned. The Committee was continued; and the appointment of Deputies renewed. It soon became evident, that whatever might be the fate of their attempts to procure a repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts, the Dissenters would derive considerable advantage, in other respects, from establishing a permanent body to superintend their civil concerns. It was accordingly resolved, at a general meeting of the Deputies, held at Salter’s Hall meeting-house, on the 14th of January, 1735-6, “ That there should be an annual choice of Deputies to take care of the Civil Affairs of the Dissenters.” In order to carry this resolution into effect, it was further resolved, “ That the chairman do write to the ministers of the several congregations, some convenient time before the second Wednesday in January next, to return the names of their Deputies to him fourteen days before.”

‘ The first meeting of the Deputies, elected in pursuance of these resolutions, was held at Salter’s Hall meeting-house, January 12, 1736-7, when Dr. Benjamin Avery was called to the chair. The meeting, after some preliminary business, adjourned for a fortnight, to give each member time to determine upon the most proper persons to form a Committee of twenty-one, on whom the principal business of the year was to be devolved. Accordingly, on the 26th of the same month, the Deputies met, and elected their Committee by ballot. These several elections,—of the Deputies by the congregations, and of the Committee by the Deputies,—have been continued annually from that time to the present.

‘ Mr. Holden had been chairman of the Committee from its first institution, in November, 1732, to the October meeting in 1736, when he resigned.



‘ Dr. Avery continued chairman of the Deputies, and of their Committee, from the time of his first election, for twenty-seven years; and by his indefatigable activity obtained the applause of every person interested in the cause of the Dissenters. On the death of Dr. Avery, July 23, 1764, Jasper Mauduitt, Esq. was called to the chair, which he filled very honourably till his death in 1771. He was succeeded by Thomas Lucas, Esq. who resigned, on account of ill health, in 1777. William Bowden, Esq. was then elected to the office, which he sustained two years, and dying, was succeeded by Nathaniel Polhill, Esq. From the death of this gentleman in 1782, the office was held by George Brough, Esq. till his death in 1785. He was succeeded by Edward Jeffries, Esq. who filled the situation till the year 1802, when his removal to a distant county obliged him to resign; and Ebenezer Maitland, Esq. was elected in his stead. This gentleman resigned in 1805; and was succeeded by the present chairman, William Smith, Esq. Member of Parliament for the City of Norwich.’ pp. 1—4.

The Committee has generally, with the exception of one or two members technically conversant in legal matters, consisted of gentlemen engaged in commercial pursuits, and who have, therefore, united activity and habits of business, with an attachment to the cause of civil and religious liberty. In the present Committee there is one barrister, (John Gurney, Esq. who is deputy-chairman); and we believe this is not the first year in which his name has appeared on the list. But the Deputies have the farther benefit of a permanent solicitor; an advantage they seem to have enjoyed ever since the year 1738. Thus, in a letter to their friends, circulated in reference to the bills brought into the House of Commons, about that time, for rebuilding some London churches, they remark that,

‘ In the first draughts of these bills there were several clauses which would have subjected many of the inhabitants of the parishes above named, and particularly such of them as dissented from the established church, to new and unreasonable exactions: and these seemed, to us, designed as precedents and rules for the drawing and modelling all future acts of parliament of a like nature. These, therefore, we thought it nearly concerned us to oppose, and have been so happy as to get those clauses struck out of each of the bills before they passed into laws. In our attendance upon these affairs, we found that the want of a proper attention and of a timely notice had manifestly occasioned many of the inconveniences we have laboured under. We judged it, therefore, a matter of great consequence to engage a solicitor, who should make it a part of his stated business to acquaint us with any thing that may fall under his notice, which he apprehends can any way affect the cause of civil and religious liberty, which the Protestant Dissenters have always professed to have at heart: and we have accordingly retained a person in this character, who is thought to be well qualified for the purpose; and

though we have had but a short trial of it, yet we are already convinced, by our experience, of the usefulness of this measure.' pp. 7, 8.

The preceding quotations and remarks will serve to develop the origin, nature, and objects of this constitution of Dissenting Deputies, as well as the appointment of committees for simultaneous operation: we shall next give a brief description,—an analysis we cannot attempt,—of the work they have presented to the world.

Nearly half the volume is devoted to the 'Sketch of the History and Proceedings of the Deputies,' from their origin in 1732 continued to the autumn of 1812: This sketch not only includes their various efforts to procure a repeal of all the laws by which religious liberty has been restricted; but it comprehends a concise account of numerous legal proceedings, which have been instituted, at different times, under the direction of the Committee, and many of which have terminated successfully. In a supplement to the Sketch, an orderly summary of these legal proceedings is presented under five general heads, viz. Unjust demands and prosecutions, refusals of magistrates to execute their office, refusals of clergymen to perform their duty, parochial disputes, and private disputes. After this follows, in about 50 pages, a digest of the laws which affect Protestant Dissenters, in four parts; of which part 1. exhibits, in five chapters, the laws which relate to Protestant Dissenters in general; part 2, in four chapters, the laws which relate to Dissenting Ministers; part 3. in two chapters, the laws which relate to Dissenting Schoolmasters; part 4. in two chapters, the laws which relate to Dissenting Places of Worship. The volume closes with two appendices, which contain the statutes 1 W. and M. c. 18.,—19 Geo. III. c. 44.,—52 Geo. III. c. 155., and 53 Geo. III. c. 160.; also, the oaths of allegiance, abjuration, and supremacy, required by 1 W. and M. c. 1., and 1 Geo. I. stat. 2. c. 13., the declaration against Popery required by 30 C. II. c. 1., the declaration of fidelity for Quakers required by 1 Geo. I. c. 6.; and lastly, a set of legal forms, viz. trust-deeds, indictments, certificates, legacies for charitable purposes, with a copious and useful index.

The historical part of this work is given very perspicuously and dispassionately: we have perceived no attempt, either to distort or to 'varnish' a story; no symptoms of art or of effort, unless it be an effort to present historical truth accurately in the smallest possible compass. The whole is delivered in an undorned, though not inelegant style; animadversions and strictures of every kind are, in a great measure, suppressed; the circumstances narrated are left to make their own impression, and some of them are calculated to make a very deep impression indeed.



Nearly the whole of the book, we are told in the preface, was printed in the summer of 1812, 'when a delay occurred in the publication, in consequence of the lamented death of the gentleman who had prepared the legal part of it, and had superintended the printing.' This declaration is correct; but, in our estimation, it is not sufficiently explicit. The legal summary is drawn up with great precision, indicating at once a deep and clear knowledge of the subject, and a pleasing aptitude at conveying that knowledge to others. It is perfectly free from legal pedantry, and is thrown into a most natural and convenient order, for the use of those plain men who may have most occasion to consult the volume. The praise of effecting this, which we consider as no small praise, is due to the late *Daniel Parken*, Esq. Barrister at Law, a young man of acute intellect, of extensive acquirements, and of fine taste, who, after he had been at the bar just long enough to show with what certainty he would there have risen to eminence, and to secure the esteem of some of the most distinguished men in his profession, was, by a mysterious dispensation of Providence, suddenly removed from a state of activity and usefulness here, to the happy regions where he enjoys, and will ever enjoy, "glory, honour, and immortality."

It is not easy to avoid drawing from the volume before us many pages of interesting quotation: but as we wish to excite curiosity and inquiry on this occasion, rather than to gratify them fully, we shall select only a few particulars. Our first extract relates to the celebrated question known by the name of "the Sheriff's Cause," which agitated the city from 1742 to 1767. The question was of this nature. The corporation of London having determined to build a new mansion-house for the Lord Mayor; and not being able to draw sufficient money for the purpose from the city rents and city chest, without diminishing the number or lowering the style of their *feasts*, much more than an alderman or even a common-council-man could willingly consent to; thought of the happy expedient of making a bye-law, by which money should be forced from the purses of those opulent dissenting citizens who were found to possess a scrupulous conscience. A sheriff of London must, of necessity, receive the sacrament in some parish church before he can commence the duties of his office. But there are many persons, members of the Church of England, who being of tender conscience, object to receive the sacrament as a qualification for any secular office; and, among the Dissenters, the number is very considerable of those who object conscientiously (whether they are right or wrong need not here be inquired), to receive the sacrament at any church belonging to the establishment on any occasion whatsoever.

Hence originated this most inviting scheme. We have nothing to do, said its contrivers, but to elect Dissenters one after another, as fast as we can, at the common-hall, to serve the office, first making a bye-law, "that every one who shall be elected, and *refuse* to serve the office, shall pay a *fine of six hundred pounds*;" for doubtless many of the "Presbyterians" will pay this, or even a greater sum, rather than qualify for the office in the way required by law. *Above fifteen thousand pounds were thus obtained by the corporation of London!!* The Dissenters, at last, determined to resist the demand: but we must refer to the volume before us for the whole history of this important case; and shall merely quote the speech delivered by Lord Mansfield in the House of Peers, on moving that the decision of the judges "be affirmed."

"In moving (said his lordship) for the opinion of the judges, I had two views. The first was, that the House might have the benefit of their assistance, in forming a right judgement in this cause before us. The next was, that the question being fully discussed, the grounds of our judgement, together with their exceptions, limitations, and restrictions, might be clearly and certainly known, as a rule, to be followed hereafter, in all future cases of the like nature." Here his lordship stated the question, and continued, "In every view in which I have been able to consider the matter, I think this action cannot be supported.

"If they rely on the Corporation Act, by the literal and express provision of that Act, no person can be elected who hath not within a year taken the sacrament in the church of England: the defendant hath not taken the sacrament within the year; he is not therefore elected.—Here they fail.

"If they ground it on the general design of the legislature in passing the Corporation Act, the design was to exclude Dissenters from office, and disable them from serving. For in those times, when a spirit of intolerance prevailed, and severe measures were pursued, the Dissenters were reputed and treated as persons ill-affected and dangerous to the government: the defendant, therefore, a Dissenter, and, in the eye of this law, a person dangerous and ill-affected, is excluded from office, and disabled from serving.—Here they fail.

"If they ground the action on their own bye-law; since that law was professedly made to procure fit and able persons to serve the office, and the defendant is not fit and able, being expressly disabled by statute law:—here too they fail.

"If they ground it on his disability being owing to a neglect of taking the sacrament at church, when he ought to have done it; the Toleration Act having freed the Dissenters from all obligation to take the sacrament at church, the defendant is guilty of no neglect, no criminal neglect.—Here therefore they fail."

His lordship then took up all the objections and arguments produced by Mr. Baron Perrott, to which he gave the most masterly and decisive answers. "*It is now,*" said his lordship, "*no crime*



for a man to say he is a Dissenter ; nor is it any crime for him not to take the sacrament according to the rites of the church of England : nay, the crime is if he does it contrary to the dictates of his conscience.

“ If it is a crime not to take the sacrament at church, it must be a crime by some law ; which must be either common or statute law, the canon law enforcing it depending wholly upon the statute law. Now the statute law is repealed as to persons capable of pleading that they are so and so qualified ; and therefore the canon law is repealed with regard to those persons. If it is a crime by common law, it must be so either by usage or principle. There is no usage or custom, independent of positive law, which makes non-conformity a crime. The eternal principles of natural religion are part of the common law : the essential principles of revealed religion are part of the common law ; so that any person reviling, subverting, or ridiculing them, may be prosecuted at common law. But it cannot be shewn from the principles of natural or revealed religion, that, independent of positive law, temporal punishments ought to be inflicted for mere opinions with respect to particular modes of worship. *Persecution for a sincere, though erroneous conscience, is not to be deduced from reason or the fitness of things ; it can only stand upon positive law.* It hath been said, that ‘ this being a matter between God and a man’s own conscience, it cannot come under the cognizance of a jury.’ But certainly it may : and though God alone is the absolute judge of a man’s religious profession, and of his conscience, yet there are some marks even of sincerity ; among which there is none more certain than consistency. Surely a man’s sincerity may be judged of by overt acts. It is a just and excellent maxim, which will hold good in this as in all other cases, ‘ By their fruits ye shall know them.’ Do they—I do not say go to meeting now and then—but do they frequent the meeting-house ? Do they join generally and stately in divine worship with Dissenting congregations ? Whether they do or not, may be ascertained by their neighbours, and by those who frequent the same places of worship. In case a man hath occasionally conformed for the sake of places of trust and profit, in that case, I imagine, a jury would not hesitate in their verdict. If a man then alleges he is a Dissenter, and claims the protection and the advantages of the Toleration Act, a jury may justly find, that he is not a Dissenter within the description of the Toleration Act, so far as to render his disability a lawful one. If he takes the sacrament for his interest, the jury may fairly conclude, that his scruple of conscience is a false pretence when set up to avoid a burthen. The defendant in the present cause pleads, that he is a Dissenter within the description of the Toleration Act ; that he hath not taken the sacrament in the church of England within one year preceding the time of his supposed election, nor ever in his whole life ; and that he cannot in conscience do it. Conscience is not controllable by human laws, nor amenable to human tribunals. *Persecution, or attempts to force conscience, will never produce conviction ; and are only calculated to make hypocrites, or martyrs.* My lords, there never was a single instance, from the Saxon times down to our own, in which a man was ever punished for erroneous opinions concerning

rites or modes of worship, but upon some positive law. The common law of England, which is only common reason or usage, knows of no prosecution for mere opinions. For atheism, blasphemy, and reviling the Christian religion, there have been instances of persons prosecuted and punished upon the common law; but bare non-conformity is no sin by the common law: and all positive laws inflicting any pains or penalties for non-conformity to the established rites and modes, are repealed by the Act of Toleration; and Dissenters are thereby exempted from all ecclesiastical censures. What bloodshed and confusion have been occasioned from the reign of Henry the Fourth, when the first penal statutes were enacted, down to the Revolution in this kingdom, by laws made to force conscience! *There is nothing certainly more unreasonable, more inconsistent with the rights of human nature, more contrary to the spirit and precepts of the Christian religion, more iniquitous and unjust, more impolitic, than persecution.* It is against natural religion, revealed religion, and sound policy. Sad experience, and a large mind, taught that great man, the President De Thou, this doctrine. Let any man read the many admirable things which, though a Papist, he hath dared to advance upon the subject, in the dedication of his History to Henry the Fourth of France, (which I never read without rapture), and he will be fully convinced, not only how cruel, but how impolitic, it is, to persecute for religious opinions. I am sorry, that of late his countrymen have begun to open their eyes, see their error, and adopt his sentiments. I should not have broke my heart, (I hope I may say so without breach of Christian charity), if France had continued to cherish the Jesuits, and to persecute the Huguenots. There was no occasion to revoke the Edict of Nantz; the Jesuits needed only to have advised a plan similar to what is contended for in the present case:—make a law to render them incapable of office;—make another to punish them for not serving. If they accept, punish them, (for it is admitted on all hands, that the defendant, in the cause before your lordships, is prosecutable for taking the office upon him): if they accept, punish them; if they refuse, punish them; if they say yes, punish them; if they say no, punish them. My lords, this is a most exquisite dilemma, from which there is no escaping; it is a trap a man cannot get out of: it is as bad a persecution as that of Procrustes:—if they are too short, stretch them; if they are too long, lop them. Small would have been their consolation to have been gravely told, the Edict of Nantz is kept inviolable; you have the full benefit of that Act of Toleration; you may take the sacrament in your own way with impunity; you are not compelled to go to mass. Was this case but told in the City of London as of a proceeding in France, how would they exclaim against the Jesuitical distinction! And yet in truth it comes from themselves: the Jesuits never thought of it; when they meant to persecute, their Act of Toleration, the Edict of Nantz was repealed. This bye-law, by which the Dissenters are to be reduced to this wretched dilemma, is a bye-law of the City, a local corporation, contrary to an act of parliament, which is the law of the land; a modern bye-law, of very modern date, made long since the Corporation Act, long since the



Toleration Act, in the face of them: for they knew these laws were in being. It was made in some year of the reign of the late King: I forget which; but it was made *about the time of building the Mansion house*. Now, if it could be supposed the City have a power of making such a bye-law, it would entirely subvert the Toleration Act, the design of which was to exempt the Dissenters from all penalties; for by such a bye-law they have it in their power to make every Dissenter pay a fine of six hundred pounds, or any sum they please; for it amounts to that. The professed design of making this bye-law, was to get fit and able persons to serve the office: and the plaintiff sets forth in his declaration, that if the Dissenters are excluded, they shall want fit and able persons to serve the office. But were I to deliver my own suspicion, it would be, that they did not so much wish for their services, as for their fines. Dissenters have been appointed to this office, one who was blind, another who was bed-ridden;—not, I suppose, on account of their being fit and able to serve the office. No; they were disabled both by nature and by law. We had a case lately, in the courts below, of a person chosen mayor of a corporation, while he was beyond the seas, with His Majesty's troops in America; and they knew him to be so. Did they want him to serve the office? No; it was impossible. But they had a mind to continue the former mayor a year longer, and to have a pretence for setting aside him who was now chosen, on all future occasions, as having been elected before. In the cause before your lordships, the defendant was by law incapable at the time of his pretended election: and it is my firm persuasion, that he was chosen because he was incapable. If he had been capable, he had not been chosen; for they did not want him to serve the office. They chose him, because without a breach of the law, and an usurpation on the crown, he could not serve the office. They chose him, that he might fall under the penalty of their bye-law, made to serve a particular purpose: in opposition to which, and to avoid the fine thereby imposed, he hath pleaded a legal disability, grounded on two acts of parliament. As I am of opinion that his plea is good, I conclude with moving your lordships, that the judgment be affirmed."

'The judgment was immediately affirmed *nemine contradicente*; which was accordingly entered on the journals in the following words: "Mercurii, 4th of February, 1767, It is ordered and adjudged, by the lords, spiritual and temporal, in parliament assembled, that the judgement given by the Commissioners' Delegates, appointed to hear the errors in a judgement given in the Sheriff's Court, London, and affirmed by the Court of Hustings, reversing the judgement of the said Sheriff's Court and Court of Hustings, be, and the same is hereby affirmed; and that the record be remitted." ' pp. 40—48.

In the year 1796, some recent acts of Parliament induced the Committee to make inquiries of Messrs. *Dunning, Wallace, Wedderburn, and Macdonald*, four eminent lawyers, in order to ascertain whether Dissenting places of worship were liable to be assessed for the king's and for parochial taxes. The following opinions were entered in their minutes:

' 1. As to the Land-Tax.—If the ground upon which the meeting-house is built was previous thereto subject to the Land-Tax, it is so still; but if it produces no profit to any person beyond the rent reserved in the lease of it, that rent ought to be the measure of the assessment. But where no rent is reserved, or the trustees have the inheritance of the meeting-house, and no profit is made of it by any person, it is not rateable at all.

' 2. As to Poor Rates.—This is a tax on the occupier; and if any profit is made of the meeting-house, by letting the seats or otherwise, whoever makes that profit, whether the trustees in whom the lease is vested, or the preacher, may be considered as the occupier, and rated as such. But if the meeting-house is only used as a place of meeting for religious worship, and no profit arises from it to any body, no one can be considered as having any such occupation of it as will subject it to the Poor Rate.

' 3. As to the watch, scavenger, lamp, sewer, or any other parochial or ward taxes, these will depend upon the several laws under the authority of which these taxes are collected: but if they are taxes upon the occupier they will fall under the same consideration as the Poor Laws.' p. 73.

In the following year, a man went into a dissenting place of worship at Ryegate, disturbed the congregation, and insulted the Minister. The committee recommended a prosecution; and the speech of Judge Buller on summing up the evidence, deserves attention.

' " This is an indictment founded on a statute which passed in the reign of King William and Queen Mary, and known by the name of the Toleration Act. The object of that Statute was, what every man in his heart must commend, to leave every man to worship God in his way, to follow the dictates of his own conscience, and to observe them in such a manner as he thinks right, he not doing mischief to any other member of the community. It is undoubtedly to be wished that that indulgence should be granted to all ranks of men.

' " The ground of this prosecution is, that when this Dissenting Congregation were met for the purposes of worship, the defendant Yeoman thought fit to go into this congregation, disturb them in that worship, and, according to the evidence, to insult and abuse the minister to a great degree.

' " Having proved what I may call the introductory parts of this case, namely, that this place was registered, and that the minister had a certificate granted to him, which is also required, for the purpose of the government of the country knowing who are intitled to the exemptions given by the statute, and who not; they proceed to state what passed on the 4th of December, when the congregation were assembled."

' [Mr. Justice Buller stated the evidence, and then proceeded.]

' " This is the evidence on the part of the prosecution, and this evidence is not contradicted.



“ To be sure, there cannot be more insolent or more abusive conduct than that proved on the defendant. It is said by his counsel, that he did not mean to disturb the congregation. Disturbing the minister who was then performing his duty as minister of that congregation, was the greatest insult that could be offered to that congregation. The others who were silent were not the objects of abuse, the most likely object of abuse was the minister in the act of preaching.

“ It is proved that there were no words used on the part of the minister that should give him any provocation.

“ It should be remembered, that where people are assembled together in a place of worship for the purpose of paying their duty to the Divine Being, a man who does not agree in opinion with them is not at liberty to go into that assembly, and quarrel with the minister because he does not happen to utter the doctrine which is agreeable to his mind. The object and purpose of their being allowed to have such a meeting-house, is because they do not agree with the established church.—They have ideas peculiar to themselves, and they have as much right to be pleased with their mode of worship as we have with ours, and they are protected by the law in worshipping God in their own way, if they comply with the requisites of the law, as much as we are.

“ Then these people were doing no more than by law they had a right to do, when this man chose to go into this chapel, insult the minister, and disturb the congregation in the manner you have heard. I am bound to tell you the evidence brings this man's offence clearly within the Act of Parliament: and if you believe the evidence, it is your duty to find the defendant guilty.”

‘ A proper apology being made by the defendant, he was not called up for judgement. The Committee, though they did not carry on the prosecution in this cause, contributed above £40 towards the costs.’ pp. 75—77.

We shall not give the statement which then follows of the successful proceedings of the deputies, on account of the illegal suspension of the “ Toleration Act” in the island of Jamaica; but we cannot pass over the circumstance without remarking, that the conduct of his Majesty, and of his Majesty's Government, on that momentous occasion, demands the highest commendation and the warmest gratitude. The proceedings in the case of “ Kemp against Wickes” for refusing to bury a child that had been baptized by a Dissenting Minister, have been given in a former volume\*, and need not be recapitulated here: and the measures which were adopted on occasion of Lord Sidmouth's attempt to get a bill passed that would materially affect the interests of the Dissenters, are too recent, to require our dilating upon them. But we cannot refrain from directing once more the attention

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\* Eclectic Review, vol. vi. p. 361.

of the public to the liberal sentiments advanced by his grace the Archbishop of Canterbury, during the discussion of that business in the House of Peers.

‘ Although satisfied (said his Grace) that if it had not been conceived the Toleration Act was infringed on, the present bill would not have been so much opposed, he was convinced that no such infringement was in reality intended. But although no persecution was intended, and although some misconception might exist on the subject, the flood of petitions which had been laid upon the table, ought to convince their lordships of the necessity of stopping short for the present. However he might lament what he conceived to be the errors of Protestant Dissenters, it was to be recollected the Bible was the foundation of their religious belief, as well as that of the established church, and was, or might be, in the hands of every member of the empire; and it was to be recollected *that the best of INTERPRETATIONS were but the interpretations of MEN, and that the best of men were liable to error.* He was sure that so long as the church of England should endure as a church, the Dissenters would not be disturbed by the church of England; and as he was no prophet, he did not wish to foretel what might happen to them after it was no more. As to the Bill itself, it was stated to have two objects: 1st. To procure an uniform construction of these Acts of Parliament, which were inconsistent with one another; and 2dly, to secure a more respectable description of teachers to the Dissenters than they had at present. The noble viscount, who brought in the Bill, stated that he brought it in, as he conceived, under the sanction of the Dissenters. But the Dissenters had thought fit to oppose it; and they must be allowed to be the best judges of what was for their own interests. His grace therefore conceived that more injury than good would result from persisting in the measure; and thought it would be better not to attempt to press the Bill against the opinions of the Dissenters.’ pp. 136—7.

We shall venture only upon two quotations more, and they are inserted for the purpose of rectifying two very prevailing mistakes. Lord Sidmouth, we are told, “moved for an account of *licenses* granted in each year, &c;” on which we find the following note:

‘ The use of this word, even for convenience sake, is equally invidious and unwarrantable. No such word is used in either of the Acts of Parliament. The legal rights which the Dissenters obtain by qualifying and registering, in no degree depend upon the discretion of the courts in which those formalities are to be complied with, nor on the granting of the certificate which the law has directed to be given to them as evidence of such compliance.’ p. 106.

In the summary of laws, we meet with the succeeding note on the meaning of the word “*conventicle*.”



• This term which in strictness only signifies a *small* assembly, has generally been employed to denote an *unlawful* one. Since the Toleration Act, however, as Lord Mansfield once said, it cannot with any propriety be applied in this sense, to the meetings of Dissenters.

• The first time it occurs in the Statute Book, appears to be in reference to the schools of Wickliffe, 2 H. IV. c. 15. In this Act (which was repealed by 25 H. VIII. c. 14, and revived by 1 and 2 Ph. and M. c. 6, which was repealed by 1 Eliz. c. 1. § 15,) it is recited, that “divers false and perverse people of a certain new sect, of the faith of the sacraments of the church, and the authority of the same, damnably thinking, and against the law of God and the church usurping the office of preaching, do perversely and maliciously, in divers places within the said realm, under the colour of dissembled holiness, preach and teach in these days, openly and privily, divers new doctrines and wicked heretical and erroneous opinions, contrary to the same faith and blessed determinations of the holy church: and of such sect and wicked doctrine and opinion they make unlawful conventicles and confederacies, they hold and exercise schools, they make and write books, they do wickedly instruct and inform people,” &c. In order, therefore, “that this wicked sect, preachings, doctrines, and opinions should *from henceforth cease and be utterly destroyed*,” it is there ordained that persons suspected might be arrested and imprisoned, and on conviction in the Ecclesiastical Court, receive sentence of imprisonment and fine: and might also, on refusing to abjure their errors, or on relapsing after abjuration, be left to the Secular Court, and the sheriffs, &c. “them shall receive, and them before the people in a high place do cause to be *burnt*, that such punishment may strike in fear to the minds of others.” Pickering’s Edit. 1762. In the later editions, this Statute is omitted. It was the first which authorised the burning of heretics.

• The term “conventicle” occurs in a more favourable, or, however, in a less specific sense, in Stat. 21 H. VIII. c. 16. § 6. “That none of the said strangers, artificers, or handicraftsmen, &c. shall assemble in any company, fellowship, congregation, or *conventicle*, but only in the common hall of their crafts.” pp. 187—9.

If we look still farther back into the early ages of the Christian church, we shall find that nearly four centuries had elapsed, before the word *conventicle* was employed to convey the notion of any thing heretical or unlawful. The Latin name *conventiculum* signifies no more, in its original notation, than an *assembly*, and it was, therefore, frequently used by ancient writers to denote a church, as were also the words *concilium*, *synodus*, *councilabulum*, &c. though these are words of various signification. Lactantius, speaking of the persecutors in the time of Diocletian, says, “They were eagerly set upon shedding human blood; and one of them in Phrygia burn-

ed a whole people, together with their *conventiculum* [church] where they were met together."\*

Arnobius, also, when complaining of the persecutions, asks, "Why did our Scriptures deserve to be thrown into the flames? Why did our *conventicula* deserve to be so barbarously pulled down?"† The following quotation, which we present in its original language, is still more striking. "Ubi omnia loca circumplexa est Ecclesia Conventicula constituta sunt, et Rectores et cætera officia in Ecclesiis ordinata sunt."‡ Hence we see that, in those times, the word *conventicula* was not appropriated to heretical meetings: but when it began soon afterwards to be used in an opprobrious sense, that sense was made evident by some suitable epithet. Thus, in the Theodosian Code: "A conventiculis suis Hereticæ superstitionis turba propulsetur."§ And in Vincentius Lirinensis, a very able though rather intemperate writer, we meet with the following satirical passage: "Audent etenim polliceri et docere, quod in Ecclesia, id est, in communionis suæ conventiculo magna et specialis ac plane personalis quædam sit Dei Gratia."|| But we have said enough on the original meaning of this word: let us now proceed to other subjects.

We may, perhaps, without much impropriety, avail ourselves of this opportunity to trouble our readers with some observations connected with the general topic of Dissent. On this important question, diversities of opinion, it is well known, exist among those, whose sentiments the Eclectic Review is generally supposed to speak, and even in the Critical Cabinet itself. But differences of sentiment, such as these, may be held without dissention. There have been among us, some Churchmen who can just admit that dissent is justifiable; others, equally attached to the Establishment, who see that dissent may be productive of advantage to that Church, and to religion in general: we have known a very few who are dissenters of that class, which can just tolerate (of course, we mean *mentally*) an establishment; but a considerable majority consists of those who revere true religion wherever they find it, and can receive with delight the instruction of its ministers, whether delivered in a cathedral, in a meeting-house, or in a barn; who are friends to the religious establishment of this country, though they are not blind to its blemishes; who, therefore, assent where they can, and dissent only where their conscience absolutely compels them; who, consequently, re-

\* Lactan. lib. v. c. 11.

† Arnob. cont. Gent. lib. iv.

‡ Ambrosiaster in Ephes. 4. p. 948. § Cod. Th. lib. 16. Tit. 5. de Hæc. leg. 10. || Vin. Lir. Common. cap. 32.



joice in the hope furnished by present prospects, that the necessity of non-conformity will be diminished, and cheerfully anticipate the time when all shall become "*one fold under one Shepherd*." It is by an accordance with these sentiments, that we wish the "*Eclectic Review*" to be characterized.

The decorous silence, which the writers in different Reviews have long observed with regard to each other, has, of late, been broken, and, we think, with propriety. We consider ourselves now called upon to break the silence we have hitherto kept, with respect to the "*Quarterly Review*;" a work whose principles we in the main approve, and many of the articles in which we have perused with cordial satisfaction. A few, however, of their disquisitions have been of a nature which we cannot possibly commend; especially such as contain sneers at vital religion, or illiberal strictures upon conscientious dissent. In the 19th number of that publication there was an amusing, though a very desultory, and, in some respects, very uncandid article, occasioned by Messrs. Bogue and Bennett's *History of Dissenters*; a work, which, it is well-known, is not to be regarded as an authorized organ of modern Non-conformists, but as sometimes developing sentiments and exhibiting a spirit, which by many are highly disapproved of. From this "*Gossip's story*," in the *Quarterly*, we shall take the liberty of transcribing three or four passages.

"It is humiliating to recollect what has been suffered for no weightier ground of dispute in the beginning than the surplice and the sign of the cross in baptism! Schism which originated in no better cause could have no good effect."

"Had the Dissenters been as liberal as they are opulent, their colleges would have vied with ours; their endowments would have been (comparatively with their numbers) as rich; their education as complete; their degrees as honorable."

"But the spirit of sectarianism is narrow and sullen; it starves its own cause; and the dissenting clergy are now, as they ever have been, soured by their situation, like plants which grow in the shade."

"This spirit of profession necessarily produces a system of gloomy and ungracious manners."

"The spirit of dissent is as little favourable to literature as to manners: the muses, as well as the graces are heathenish, and therefore an abomination to the professors."

On each of these strange sentences we shall make a few remarks. And first, we would ask this Reviewer of the *History of Dissenters*, with what attention he has examined the work he professes to criticize, or, indeed, *any* history of the reign of the second Charles, that he can insinuate that the

most weighty of the earlier "grounds of dispute" related to "the surplice and the sign of the cross?" Is he really ignorant of the true occasion of the expulsion of so many excellent clergymen from the English Church? Does he imagine that they were all men of like or inferior character to the Thomas Cartwright who drew from Hooker his erudite and valuable "Ecclesiastical Polity?" If so, we would request his attention to a passage from Burnet, who thus speaks of the "act of uniformity."

"The act passed by no great majority [in the Commons the numbers were 186 to 180,] and by it all who did not conform to the liturgy by the 24th of August, St. Bartholomew's day, 1662, were deprived of all ecclesiastical benefices, *without leaving any discretional power with the king*, in the execution of it, and *without making provision for the maintenance of those who should be so deprived*: a severity neither practised by Queen Elizabeth in the enacting her liturgy, nor by Cromwell in ejecting the loyalists, in both which a fifth part of the benefice was reserved for their subsistence!" "The book of Common Prayer, with the new corrections, was that to which they were to subscribe. But the corrections were so long preparing, that there were few books printed ready for sale when the day came. So many, that were well affected to the Church, but that made conscience of subscribing to a book that they had not seen, left their benefices on that very account. Some made a journey to London on purpose to see it. With so much precipitation was that matter driven on, that it seemed expected, that the clergy should subscribe implicitly to a book that they had never seen. *This was done by too many*, as I was informed by some of the bishops. But the Presbyterians were now in great difficulties. *Calamy* and *Barter* refused the sees of Litchfield and Hereford; and about *two thousand* of them fell under the parliamentary deprivation as they gave out. This raised a grievous outcry over the nation. Some few, and but few, of the episcopal party were troubled at this severity, or apprehensive of the very ill effects it was like to have. Here were many men much valued, who were now cast out ignominiously, reduced to great poverty, provoked by much spiteful usage, and cast upon those popular practices that both their principles and their circumstances *seemed to justify*, of forming separate congregations and of diverting men from the public worship, and from considering their successors as the lawful pastors of those churches in which *they* had served."\*

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\* Burnet's Own Time, vol. i. pp. 266—269. See also Locke's



Let the Quarterly Reviewer meditate upon this statement, and then consider whether it be not “humiliating” to his own mental and moral character, to represent *two thousand men* cast out thus unjustifiably, as having “no weightier grounds for their nonconformity than “the surplice and the sign of the cross.” Let him peruse Baxter’s liberal and able work, entitled “*Catholic Communion defended against both extremes: and unnecessary division confuted, by reasons against both the active and passive ways of separation,*” a work in which he defends his practice of frequent communion in the parish churches; next let him turn to the performance of Mr. Toombs, a contemporary *Baptist Minister*, in favour of the same practice; and then determine how nearly allied to calumny is that language, which charges such men with separation upon the trifling grounds which he specifies. “Nay,” says Baxter, in the book just mentioned, “in 1660 and 1661, when we attempted a concord with the bishops in vain, we never said a word against a *form of prayer* [we employ his own Italics], *nor the most of the liturgy, nor holy-days, nor kneeling at the sacrament,* (but only against excommunicating the faithful that scruple it), *nor the surplice, nor the ring in marriage, nor laying the hand on a book in swearing,* and other such; because, at least, much may be said for them; and if we laid our stress on doubtful things, many would think the rest were no other.”\*

If we descend from the eventful period in which Baxter and so many other excellent men, as Burnet testifies, were expelled from the church, to much more recent times, we shall find, without entering upon the various difficult questions, which relate to the source of ecclesiastical power, the number and nature of church officers, &c. that men may absent themselves from their parish churches, and worship among dissenters, although they think clerical vestments, the use of the sign of the cross, and many other ceremonies, matters of extreme indifference. We adverted to one or two of these in a late critique on Dr. Marsh’s Reply to Dean Milner’s Strictures; we here present another, not in the language of “a sectary,” but in that of an *Episcopalian Clergyman*.

“The service appointed by law requires prayers and sermon in “the morning, and prayers and catechising or instruction in “the afternoon, and that *in every parish*. But how is this

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Works, vol. iv. p. 540. edit. 1777, where we are informed that “not one man in forty could have *seen* and *read* the book they did so perfectly assent and consent to.”

Baxter’s Cath. Commu. part iv. p. 21.

“ to be done, even if a clergyman undertakes the care of only  
 “ two churches? It cannot be. How then is it possible for him  
 “ to perform the legal duty, if he undertakes the charge of  
 “ *three or four* parishes? I am aware that this is connived at,  
 “ or dispensed with, and that it is become a custom to omit  
 “ prayers and catechising, or other instruction, the second part  
 “ of the day, *in most parishes in the kingdom*; but I know  
 “ not who has any authority to dispense with this; and I believe  
 “ that the inhabitants of every parish can insist on its being  
 “ performed. I am *sure* it is necessary.”

“ God will have his work done; and if they who undertake  
 “ it will not do it, *he will certainly employ others*; for his  
 “ counsel shall stand, and all that he has determined shall as-  
 “ suredly come to pass. For the last fifty years, at least, there  
 “ has been such a departure from the doctrines and spirit of  
 “ Christianity, among those who undertook and were re-  
 “ gularly sent to be buidlers,\* that, like the Jewish priests of  
 “ old, they have ‘refused that stone which is become the head  
 “ of the corner.’ What has taken place in the mean time?  
 “ God has raised up *others*. ‘He has chosen the foolish things  
 “ of the world, to confound the wise; and God hath chosen  
 “ the weak things of the world, to confound the things which  
 “ are mighty.’ Many have gone forth and declared publicly  
 “ the way of salvation through Jesus Christ; and though they  
 “ were not regularly ordained to the work of the ministry, God  
 “ has blessed his truth delivered by them, so that they have  
 “ been the instruments of bringing many to the knowledge and  
 “ practice of the gospel.”†

“ Sectarianism (says this Quarterly critic) starves its own  
 cause.” Here a novel kind of accusation is brought against the  
 unfortunate Non-cons. The usual charge has been, that however  
 freely they may contribute to the furtherance of party purposes,  
 they exercise no true benevolence. But this has been refuted by  
 the fact, that congregations of not more than 500 persons, and  
 with no opulent men among them, have raised £150 by way

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\* Matters are by no means so bad in 1814 as they were twenty years  
 ago, when this author wrote. There is now great reason to hope  
 that more than *one tenth* of the Episcopal clergymen actually preach  
 the doctrines of the Church to which they belong. Many would  
 think this is a meagre source of congratulation; but things, we trust,  
 are rapidly improving.

† See “Three Letters to a Clergyman,” prefixed to the “Prin-  
 ciples of Christianity,” by Thomas Bowman, M.A., Vicar of Martham,  
 Norfolk.



of collection, after a sermon delivered in favour of the suffering Germans, and other objects of benevolence equally remote from the promotion of sectarian interests. The ground is, therefore changed; and though it may seem a waste of time to meet charges so idle, yet, as they make their impression on a certain class of readers, we cannot in justice pass them over silently. Such readers, among whom probably is this writer, need to be informed, that there are funds among the several denominations of dissenters, by which the annual incomes of several *hundreds* of their ministers are augmented; that there are also other funds, by which comfortable pensions are allowed to the widows and orphans of ministers. And with regard to stipend, if such dissenting ministers as are placed over opulent congregations (not a very small proportion) “are soured by their situation,” they must have the quality of shewing a “vinegar aspect” under a very warm sun. But, suppose the fact to be as this gentleman represents, that the *majority* pine under “the shade” of a “narrow and sullen” policy; still the taunting tone in which it is stated, and which we here principally note, is assumed with a very ill grace by a writer in a publication, from which we learn, that out of 1766 *curates* of the Episcopal Church, whose salaries are known, no fewer than 1498 thrive and fatten upon incomes that *do not amount to £70 per annum*, and nearly 1000 upon stipends of *less than £50 ! ! \**

But let us proceed to this writer’s references to the “professor’s gloomy and ungracious manners.” Dull wretches! they neither dance at public assemblies, nor play at cards for money, nor frequent the theatre three times a week! they are as ignorant of Hoyle as an infant is of Hebrew, know no more what to do with a chapeau bras, than with the club of Hercules, and never touch any dramatic work but a “purified Shakespeare!” their manners *must* be “ungracious.” Well, be it so, we have no inclination to defend them from the charge. Let us be permitted, however, to tell this modern “Christian” of the Quarterly Review, that his mode of caricaturing methodistic visages and habits, is very like what was fashionable among ancient heathens when ridiculing the “professors” of their times. In proof of this, we subjoin the following parallel.

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\* Quarterly Review, vol. x. p. 45.

## QUARTERLY REVIEWER.

*A modern Christian.*

"A large proportion of those who undergo this *doleful* discipline (viz. at the Methodist schools) run wild as soon as they are released from it." "Dancing is prohibited amongst them; and those school-masters and school-mistresses who admit dancing-masters into their schools, and those parents who employ them for their children, are for that offence excluded from society." "Such institutes have sent abroad among us a body of Protestant Predicants, not less intolerant in spirit, than their predecessors and counterparts in the Roman Church, and who bring with them nothing in their costume or ceremonies to mitigate the *graceless and joyless manners* with which they infect the community. In their mouths the beauty of holiness is a metaphor inapplicable even to absurdity. They have stript religion of all its outward grace, and in proportion as they overspread the country, *the very character of the English face is altered*; for methodism transforms the countenance as certainly, and almost as speedily, as sottishness or opium." "They have obtained as distinct a physiognomy as the Jews or the Gipsies; — *coarse, hard, and dismal visages*, as if some spirit of darkness had got into them and was looking out of them." "Their political opinions are made up from the *Apocalypse*; and instead of regarding Bonaparte as the sworn enemy of mankind, they consider him as the man upon the white horse, to whom a crown has been given; and perceive, forsooth, that *Providence has great purposes to fulfil by his agency*." "They are Separatists, in all the ordinary observances of life; and their *leaden countenances* bear the impression of the iron mould in which they have been stamped."\*

## CÆCILIOUS.

*An ancient Heathen.*

"Poor wretches! learn what you are likely to enjoy after death, by what you feel alive." "Do not the Romans without your God, rule and govern, and lord it over the whole world, and you? But you all this time, pensive and anxious, sequester yourselves from the *most fashionable pleasures*; you visit not our plays, but renounce our pomps; never does Christian appear at a public feast; you abhor our sacred games, nor will you touch a bit of what the priests have partaken before you, nor taste one drop of what is consecrated at our altars,—so much are you afraid of the very Gods you deny: not a flower upon your heads, nor any costly perfumes upon your bodies; all your ointments you reserve for funerals, yet you allow not of garlands to sepulchres: a *doleful, ghastly kind of folks, of pale hue, and fearful looks*; in truth worthy our pity and that of our Gods too, whom they thus cry out against. Thus you are the wretches who neither live after death nor before it. Let me advise you, therefore, if you have any shame left, no longer to be gazing upon the quarters of the heavens, and to be *prying into the fate and secrets of the world*; 'tis enough in conscience for such an *illiterate, unpolished, rude, clownish sect*, enough in all reason for such *leaden heads* to look only to their feet; for to whom it is not given to understand so much as the affairs of men, it is certainly denied to explore things divine."

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\* See Minucius Felix § 12, Quarterly Review, vol. iv. pp. 503, 504, 510: and for another parallel amongst heathens to the Quarterly Reviewer's sneer at the "Methodist" refusal to eat "black-puddings," the learned reader may turn to cap. 9. of Tertullian's Apologetic, or the Apostolic Can. 55, for the reasons on which the "leaden headed methodists" of those days founded their practice.



“The spirit of dissent, (our liberal censor remarks), is as little favourable to literature as to manners.” Unless by “literature” he means such prose as the infidel speculations of Godwin and Sir William Drummond, such dramatic poetry as that of Congreve and Wycherley, or such lyric poetry as that of *Little Moore* ;—unless by manners, he means the manners of the masquerade and of the gaming-table ; we scruple not to say, that this passage, short as it is, contains as gross a misrepresentation as ever was penned by any man, who was not either shamefully ignorant or miserably prejudiced. If there are, as he assures us, with great emphasis, “blind reasoners, who do not see that it is to their intellect, not to their principles of dissent, that Milton, and Bunyan, and Defoe, owe their immortality ;” there are, as *he* demonstrates with equal force, though very unintentionally, other “reasoners” equally “blind, who do not see that it is to their” want of mental power and genius, “not to their principles of dissent,” that must be imputed the circumstance of others not attaining the imaginary immortality to which he points. Whether “the muses” or the sciences be “heathenish” or not, we need not here inquire ; but we *will* affirm, and not fear contradiction, that, without looking back to former times, the “age we live in” exhibits, among Dissenters, as able and as successful cultivators of every department of literature, science, and the fine arts, as can be found in the British dominions. Now, if the train of argumentation assumed by the writer, on whom we have thought it a *duty*, for once, to animadvert at length, be true, the various examples which are in every man’s recollection would always be adduced as *exceptions* to a general rule. But, do we ever hear any man of sense and candour say?—Nonconformity is a very stultifying, debasing, grovelling thing, stunting fancy in its growth, repressing the force of intellect, checking the expansion of science, and forbidding all excursions into the regions of taste by the interposition of its *leaden* sceptre ;—yet, Dr. \*\*\*\* is a man of extraordinary attainments in bibliography, the oriental dialects, and general literature, and Dr. \*\*\*\*, one of our first-rate classical and biblical critics, though the former is a Methodist, and the latter an Independent ! That individual, also, who has, for half a century, borne the palm amongst English mathematicians, was, we learn with astonishment, from the *Public Characters*, when a young man, actually a dissenting preacher ! There is one of the most acute, the most original, and the most profound, of modern essayists, but “they do whisper that the man is” a Baptist ! And more than this ; one of our most celebrated chemists, one of our most accurate ornithologists, one of our sweetest lyric poets, as well as our first-rate

painter, our best engraver,—the Bartolozzi of his day, the architect who has evinced more taste and science than any of his cotemporaries; and the Barrow of modern preachers, who unites the imagination of Burke, and the accuracy and comprehension of Pitt, with the energy of Fox, and who is, at once, the most eloquent speaker, and the most eloquent writer of the age;—are all dissenters! If this gentleman of “the Quarterly” can find *any* man who will in good earnest wonder at all this, *we* shall be greatly surprised, if the next step in his experience do not show him his wonderer safely lodged within the walls of St. Luke’s.—The truth, we fear, is, that with all this writer’s affectation of liberality, he is not a genuine friend to religious toleration. Should this be the case, however, such is the spirit of the times, that he will, in all probability, soon stand alone, unless he confine himself to the society of well-meaning but narrow-minded “clerks,” of more than 50 years of age.

The great recent increase of genuine piety among men of all persuasions, has produced a corresponding diffusion of true liberality of sentiment. The evils of a sectarian, dividing spirit, are more than ever understood and deplored; while the advantages of honest, and temperate dissent, when conscience absolutely demands it, are well comprehended, and almost universally acknowledged. In England, there now exists a toleration, which, though not quite complete, is the glory of the land: this may possibly diminish the number of Dissenters; but it will not eradicate them, nor, indeed, is that to be wished. “Could we suppose toleration to exist without Dissenters, unless the church, to which all belonged, were (which is impossible) absolutely perfect, and incapable of corruption, a great proportion of the benefits of toleration would be lost. The grand benefit of toleration is, that (to a certain extent) it produces Dissenters; because the existence of Dissenters is highly conducive to the interests of religion, morality, and good government.”

To have no non-conformists would, in the present state of society and of religion among us, be a great evil; yet we dare not say, that if Dissenters should increase so as to rival Episcopalians in number, there would not be a great evil of another kind. It would be easy, however, to allow of perfect toleration with entire safety to a national establishment. Let the doctrine of the endowed church be evangelical, (as happily it is in England,) let her pay a proper attention to elementary and catechetical instruction, and let the preaching be plain, practical, expository, and devotional (seldom, if ever, polemical); let care be taken, that the clergy be pious, zealous, discreet, and able men, not merely preachers, but *pastors* of their respective flocks; let bishops be



required to *preach* frequently \*, as well as to superintend the Presbyters, and “watch for the souls of all;” let there be no undue or intemperate assumption, in the establishment, of superior purity or authority over other churches, either in respect of doctrine, worship, government, or discipline; let the terms both of clerical and lay communion be such as are calculated to facilitate the admission of all pious men of evangelical sentiments, (however they may differ upon minor points), while they tend to exclude men of immoral conduct or of heterodox principles; and let there be such an augmentation to the incomes of the subordinate clergy, as shall render them both happy and useful in their stations; and such a gradual lowering of the enormous emoluments attached to a few of the bishoprics, as shall exclude all temptation to dissatisfaction in the minor clergy, as well as all risk of sudden revolution in that respect:—An establishment thus constituted, can have nothing to fear from the widest toleration; and, if we do not mistake, all circumstances are powerfully conspiring to this issue of things. While we rejoice in these prospects, we are not unthankful for what is already possessed. In regard to ourselves, though we often commit the sin of worshipping among “the gloomy professors,” we have listened with delight to the organ’s noble swell, and have felt our hearts dance within us at the sound of the Sabbath bells, while our eyes have glistened as we have gazed at the village steeple whence the sound proceeded; we have cheerfully trudged, with other worshippers, “the churchyard path along,” and have been ready to exclaim, as we approached to the sacred fane where we knew the word of God was faithfully dispensed,—O happy England, how blessed art thou amongst the isles of the earth! In thee “God is known,” and on thee he pours his richest mercies. “Thy pastures are clothed with flocks, thy valleys also are covered with corn; they shout for joy, they also sing.” Thy merchants are princes, thy hospitals are palaces. Thou receivest the word of life freely, and while thou “sittest as a queen among the nations,” thou dispensest it to them bountifully.—Thy political constitution is the glory of the world; and thy civil and religious rights are so confirmed and established, that thy people “shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig-tree, and none shall make afraid.” Industry and activity are every where seen in thee, and contentment is depicted in every countenance. “Happy is that people that is in such a case: yea, happy is that people whose God is the Lord!”

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\* “The constant sense of all churches, in all ages, has been, that *preaching* was the bishop’s *great duty*, and that he ought to lay himself out in it most particularly.”—Burnet’s *Pastoral Care*, p. 128.

Art. V. *The Letters of Mrs. Elizabeth Montagu*, with some of the Letters of her Correspondents. Part the Second, containing her Letters from the age of twenty-three to forty, ending with the Coronation of George the Third. Published by Matthew Montagu, Esq. her Nephew and Executor. Vols. III. and IV. crown 8vo. pp. 340 and 370. Price 14s. T. Cadell and W. Davies. 1813.

**B**EFORE we speak of letter-writing, it should be distinctly understood what we mean by a letter. There is hardly any subject which has not been treated of in *letters*: history, divinity, belles lettres, ethics, botany, astronomy,—all these we have seen handled in series of *letters*, to a young nobleman, or to an only son, or to a youth at the university. But, in criticising letter-writing, we should no more include these under the general denomination of letters, because they may happen to have “my dear boy” at the top, and “I remain, &c. &c.” at the bottom, than, in speaking of conversation, we should include under that term the pleadings and counter pleadings of a couple of counselors, because one of them speaks in reply to the other. By conversation we understand something perfectly distinct from lecturing and discussing, and letters we consider as nothing but a conversation upon paper. It follows, that the merits of the one are also the merits of the other.

Now, every body knows what good conversation is. Its charm does, indeed, lie more in the manner than in the matter, and often leaves a general impression which it is not easy to justify by particular specimens of excellence; yet the ingredients may be put down, we suppose, much as follows: here and there an anecdote, never lengthened into a history; a philosophical observation, never spun into a discussion; a trait of character, never descending into scandal; a passing criticism, never laboured into a critique; a little reasoning, never rounded and squared into demonstration; and all this enlivened by wit that is not coarse, and humour that is not ill-natured, and the play of an imagination that is always fluttering above this little world of every day concerns, but never soaring among the stars. Above all, in conversation, every thing must be,—or must appear to be,—easy, artless, unprepared; no eagerness to set yourself off, no impatience to say your own *good things*, no winding the conversation round till you get it to a convenient point for bringing out your ready store. The subject is supposed to spring naturally, and the company to speak extempore upon it, and it will not be tolerated that one shall bear away the bell from all the rest, by bringing out, as an impromptu, what he has been labouring hard at for a week. Admiration is a thing of which every one likes to have as much as he can obtain; and of which, therefore, no one will permit another, if he can help it, to carry off any upon false pretences.



The foregoing remarks are made upon conversation ;—upon conversation as distinguishable from discussion, or story-telling, or tea-table chit-chat : but we think they apply equally to letter-writing. We are sorry, however, to apply them to the volumes before us, from which we are hardly prepared to bring one illustrative example. The letters are in general mere gossiping ; ‘ I like Miss A,’ and ‘ I dislike Miss B ;’ ‘ this duchess is just arrived at Tunbridge,’ and ‘ that lady has just left it ;’ ‘ I have been very ill, and am better,’ (for the lady is a valetudinarian,) and ‘ I heard that you have been very ill, but I hope you are better.’ Sometimes, however, she is grave, and then nothing in the world can be conceived more dull, more common-place, more utterly unworthy of the press than her observations. And yet this is more tolerable than her gaiety, her laboured wit, and forced antitheses. In short, we have looked nearly through the first volume, and have not been able to discover any one reason that any one letter should have been published.

We quote the following passages very nearly at random. First, for idle and insipid gossiping.

‘ We went from Salisbury to Stone Henge, which is indeed an astonishing thing ; and every way one would account for it there arises an insuperable difficulty. We then went to Amesbury, where great improvements have been and are still making ; the winding river is pretty, but the place is marshy and wet, and I think promises neither an improvement of health nor cheerfulness. The front of the house looks very prettily on the outside ; within there are but few rooms, only one good one, and that is regular, and is prettily furnished with Mr. Wootton’s landscapes. From Amesbury we reached Marlborough early enough to walk in Lord Hertford’s garden, with which Dr. Courayer was pleased as at seeing a sort of acquaintance, but it has nothing in its aspect to recommend it to strangers ; there is a mount in it of a surprising height, not raised to satisfy the curious eye merely with a prospect, but it has of old times been made as a military observatory.’ Vol. III. pp. 59—60.

‘ I am very sorry for the account you give of Miss Southwell, but I hope when the spring advances she will recover. Why did not Lady Sunderland come to Bath for her cholic ? You are very good to say you should not want any temptation to come into Berkshire but what I and my little Sandleford could offer ; I will flatter myself that Mr. Perceval will be so well as to set you at liberty this summer. You do not mention the little Pere, he does not write, and I want grievously to know how he does. Mr. Montagu and my sister join in respects to you.’ Vol. III. pp. 78—9.

And so on, page after page. And yet, after all, this insipidity is rather a negative quality, of which examples cannot be given, —rather an absence of something which you cannot bring forward, than the presence of something that you can.

Next for the philosophy of these letters. The following must be allowed to be very true, though we do not think it very lively.

‘ In my solitary musings in the coach, I had sometimes cast an eye of envy on the humble cottage, which to the beholders, if not to the inhabitants, shews the sweet aspect of content. We are apt to think their wishes have as narrow limits as their possessions, and their tempers are as uniform as their way of life ; that tranquillity must reside in minds that have never been agitated by hope or fear, awakened by solicitous cares, or refined by delicacy ; which last, is most perhaps, the enemy of human happiness. A delicate person, like a sickly traveller on an inconstant sea, suffers equally from too brisk or too languid a gale, must have fair weather, sunshine, prosperous winds, and favourable tides, to make the voyage pleasant ; while insensibility bears every change with equanimity, unruffled in the most boisterous storm, unwearied in the dearest calm. Thus in the wanderings of imagination, had I run over all the advantages of rustic stupidity, but when your letter presented to me pleasures which can arise only from delicacy of taste and a well awakened sensibility ; I changed my opinion, envied neither shepherd nor shepherdess, but giving due preference to the pleasures of reason and taste, I sat down by my fireside with more than calm content, with real delight and satisfaction.’ Vol. III. pp. 251—2.

The following is not true.

‘ When we consider what discoveries in philosophy have been made, how many arts have been improved, how easily by printing each improvement in science is communicated to all nations, and how safely conveyed through ages, we are tempted to think meanly of the ancients. One might imagine all Newton’s light, and Bacon’s sense, entering the mind of every attentive reader ; that each age should stand on the eminence raised by the former, “ till mountains, heaped on mountains, reached the skies ;” but alas ! we know by experience it is otherwise. Great improvements are made by the extraordinary portion of intellectual gifts in individuals, not the inheritance and succession of ages. From Archimedes to Sir Isaac Newton, what a chasm ! The only great and perfect in art or science, are the self taught.’ Vol. III. pp. 213—14.

Lastly, to give Mrs. M. every chance for pleasing, let us have a specimen of her gaiety.

‘ Of all fowl I love the goose best, who supplies us with her quill ; surely a goose is a goodly bird ; if its hiss be insignificant, remember that from its side the engine is taken with which the laws are registered, and history recorded ; though not a bird famous for courage, from this same ample wing are the heroes’ exploits engraven on the pillar of everlasting Fame ; though not an animal of sagacity, yet does it lend its assistance to the precepts of philosophy ; if not beautiful, yet with its tender touch in the hands of some inspired lover is Lesbia’s blush, Sacharissa’s majesty, and Chloe’s bloom, made lasting ; and locks, which, “ curled or uncurled, have turned to grey,”



by it continue in eternal beauty; and will you forsake this creature for a little pert fowl with a gaudy feather?' Vol. III. pp. 14. 15.

'Having considered what time has done to the works of man, let us see how it deals with the men themselves; the turbulent William Rufus lies here very quiet in a stone chest; in another place, of all the pride and ambition of Cardinal Beaufort there remains only a mitred monument; of the learned William of Wickham merely a brazen figure. The bones of Saxon kings, who fought bloody battles with each other for a less compass of land than a modern gamester will lose at a rubber at whist, lie quietly interred by each other, and their bones are contained in a chest not big enough to hold a fine lady's muffs and tippets. What an excellent arithmetician is death! He subtracts and divides till he sets all accounts even, and makes the sum total of the king and cobbler equal.' Vol. III. p. 55.

We could have wished, however, that the lady had been content with being alternately dull and flippant, and had spared her profaneness. We have several very light scriptural allusions in our mind, and the following very shocking passage.

'Dear Madam, I stand, in respect to my account with you, as the wicked do in regard to a future state; I almost equally dread being annihilated in your memory, or condemned by the sentence that you must pass on me, if I exist there.' Vol. IV. p. 181.

But enough. Except for this last fault, (which is not a literary one,) none of our censure lights upon the author of these letters. They are letters of which no one, receiving them from an acquaintance, would grudge the postage. But we cannot sufficiently wonder at the partiality of the publisher, in thinking the public so far interested in Mrs. M., as to receive with eagerness and applause the diary of her illnesses, and the history of every glass of Tunbridge-water that she drank.

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Art. VI. *The Letters of the British Spy*, 12mo. pp. 214. Price 5s. 6d. Baltimore: London, reprinted. Sharpe and Hailes, 1812.

THE management of the secret and the exposition of the authorship of these letters, are rather clumsy. The commencement of their appearance in the *Virginia Argus*, was preceded and prepared by an idle story, gravely told, of the manuscripts', from which they are selected, having been 'found in the bedchamber of a boarding-house in a seaport town of Virginia.' This chamber had been occupied, some time before, by a person who was represented by the mistress of the house as a 'meek and harmless young man, who meddled very little with the affairs of others, and concerning whom no one appeared sufficiently interested to make any inquiry.' He had left his lodgings, and gone nobody knew whither; and 'mine hostess' having no means of re-

storing to him his property, fairly considered it as lawful prize, and presented it to a person who liberally places a selection from it at the service of the editor of the newspaper. The writer assumes the character of a young Englishman of rank; which rank, together with his name, he represents himself as concealing, while he maintains a studied insignificance of manners and conversation, in order to be at perfect freedom in prosecuting his observations, and that the subjects of them might not be put on their guard against his inspection. He pretends to be addressing the letters to a distinguished senator of his native country, a Mr. S——, who is easily identified by a reference made to the eloquence displayed by him on the ‘charge of the Begums in the prosecution of Warren Hastings.’ The most pointedly ludicrous association of ideas, is repeatedly produced by the emphatical rhapsodies addressed to this correspondent, on topics of religion, on lofty and refined points of morality, and on questions of geology,—addressed, as they all are, with the most serious assumption of their being subjects for the most sympathetic interest.

A few expressions abusive of the American democracy, are thrown in here and there, by way of preserving the consistency of the assumed character: very little art, however, is exerted on this object; and if a deception was ever seriously intended, he must have been a singularly bungling performer that could not guard himself against the repeated treachery of that notorious transatlantic word ‘grade.’ Towards the end, the ill-performed sham is very nearly dropped; and on the reprinting of the letters collectively in a volume, the American publisher, in an advertisement, avows his having obtained corrections from the author; says something about the honour which the performance reflects, not only on the author, but on his country; and bears it off with a triumphant flourish and challenge in behalf of the literary claims and glories of America, where, (if he is not putting a joke on European simplicity) there exists a marvellous and preternatural faculty, which has been refused to every other part of the terrestrial creation, notwithstanding the complaisant ascription of it to every region.

‘To those who, (he remarks,) would inculcate the degrading doctrine, that this is the country

“Where Genius sickens, and where Fancy dies,”

we could offer the letters of the British Spy, as an unquestionable evidence that America is entitled to a high rank in the republic of letters; and that the empyreal *flame* can be *respired* under any region.’



The publishers of the English edition, make proclamation before it in a somewhat less imperial style ; yet they expect it to be received 'as a specimen of American literature, highly flattering to the rising genius of that nation ;' and they are informed, by a gentleman from Baltimore, that 'no original American production had ever obtained so rapid and extensive a circulation, it having, in a very short space of time, passed through four editions.' The work may, therefore, claim a short notice here, less on its own account, than as affording an indication of the stage to which the reading part of the American population has advanced in the progress of literary taste.

The supposed Englishman happens to observe the quality of the *strata* of the Atlantic coast, as they lie exposed to view on the steep banks of some of the rivers, and he hears of the fossil remains of marine animals dug up in every part of the country, back quite to the Alleghany mountains, evincing that all this region was once under the ocean. These phenomena lead him into certain reasonings and fancies about the formation of the continent ; some of which reasonings and fancies are encountered by a writer designated 'Inquirer ;' and, as if a person who has indited sentences on paper, had, thenceforth, by some law of nature, a mysterious sympathy with the composition in all its fortunes, at whatever distance it may be, the Englishman, that had wandered away no one could guess how far, had, nevertheless, an instantaneous perception that his writing was assailed, and, by some mode of agency peculiar to authors, caused a public defence to be made forthwith.

The value of these indigested geological speculations, which form at least a third part of the production, appears to be extremely trifling. They display considerable vigour of conception ; but the author has not a tenth part of the knowledge, either of facts or of the preceding doctrines and theories of philosophers, without which it is utterly ridiculous to set up for a builder of continents. It is ludicrous to see a self-important smatterer gravely referring, with a great length of quotation, to Brydone and his *Canonico Recupero*, and to the astronomical history of the Chinese, and to Voltaire's report of what the French philosophers found in that history, and to the saving of the credit of the Mosaic record by some better system of interpretation.

These fragments of philosophizing have a particularly impertinent appearance, as here thrust in among matters of a totally different order,—observations on eloquence, taste, style, national character, and the characters of distinguished American individuals. Three or four of these, indeed, occupy a very

large proportion of the space that has been left clear of currents, alluvions, and other such things, that have been forced into the letters in special adaptation, we may suppose, to the taste and favourite studies of the writer's friend Mr. S.

There is not a great deal about national character, and what there is, should, perhaps, be understood chiefly of Virginia, to which state, we apprehend that the writer's scope of observation has been, in a great measure, limited. His acquaintance with the people of Virginia, has not grown into any passionate fondness.

'I have new reason,' he says, 'to remark, almost every day, that there is throughout Virginia a most deplorable destitution of public spirit, of the noble pride and love of country. Unless the body of the people can be awakened from this fatal apathy; unless their thoughts and their feelings can be urged beyond the narrow confines of their own private affairs; unless they can be strongly inspired with the public zeal, the *amor patriæ* of the ancient republics; the national embellishment, and the national grandeur of this opulent state, must be reserved for very distant ages.' p. 177.

He says there prevails among them, notwithstanding all their boasting pride of republicanism, a spirit grossly aristocratical, which manifests itself in both its modes, the haughty and the servile, in the relative manners and style of life of the rich planters and their labourers. This spirit had been displayed to a most humiliating excess, as he represents, in the reception experienced from the Virginian gentry by the son of a certain anonymous Lord, whose conduct in America, at some former period, had rendered him very unpopular: and nothing but the pure, servile deference to nobility, as such, could have secured what so far exceeded mere civility to the son, whose personal qualities gave him not the smallest claim to respect. There is considerable force of satire in the Spy's description of the shuffling and disclaiming manner, in which he was answered by persons of both the political parties, when he plainly taxed them with the deportment which so much belied their vaunted national virtue of republican independence.

He represents, that while the state of Virginia is collectively rich, and while the passion to be rich, is the predominant moral feature of the people, the whole system of their political economy is niggardly and wretched. The emoluments of the public functionaries, he adds, are fixed according to a beggarly calculation;\* the 'roads and high-

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\* If an author has the misfortune of a bad memory, he should



ways are frequently impassable, sometimes frightful; the very few public works which have been set on foot, instead of being carried on with spirit, are permitted to languish and pine, and creep feebly along, in such a manner that the first part of an edifice grows gray with age, and almost tumbles in ruins, before the last part is lifted from the dust.' But he very justly lays a still greater emphasis on the neglect of mental cultivation. This, he rightly tells them, would be 'the best cure for the aristocratic distinctions which they profess to hate, and the best basis of the social and political equality which they profess to love.'

'They have only one public seminary of learning, a college in Williamsburg, about seven miles from this place (Richmond). This college, in the fastidious folly and affectation of republicanism, or, what is worse, in the niggardly spirit of parsimony, which they dignify with the name of economy, these democrats have endowed with a few despicable fragments of surveyors' fees, &c: thus converting their national academy into a mere *lazaretto*, and feeding its polite, scientific, and highly respectable professors, like a band of beggars, on the scraps and crumbs that fall from the financial table. And then, instead of aiding and *energizing* the police of the college by a few civil regulations, they permit their youth to run riot in all the wildness of dissipation, while the venerable professors are forced to look on, in the deep mortification of conscious impotence, and see their care and zeal requited by the ruin of their pupils, and the destruction of their seminary.' p. 127.

It can be no wonder, and the writer intimates it to be the fact, that a considerable proportion of the young men of the richer class, are led into courses of low and destructive profligacy, in which, he says, they are inspired by their infidelity, and which, he predicts, that not a few of them will terminate by 'a pistol or a halter.'

In the article of manners, he thinks that many of even the well-disposed part of the citizens of Virginia, stand in great need of improvement.

'Having heard much of the hollow ceremonious professions and

make a point of looking over his last paragraph or two, before he goes on again. In this performance, the Virginians are reproached with the want of that generous public spirit, which made Greece and Rome so illustrious. In this reproach, we may conclude, that the public functionaries are involved, and that they are told, by implication, what a fine thing it would be to resemble Fabricius, &c. &c. &c. Just four sentences later, where the author is exclaiming against the niggardly stipends of the said public servants, the noble poverty of Fabricius is expressly alluded to, as a signal example of wretchedness, as he was still worse off, it is confessed, than these ill-fated men of office in Virginia.

hypocritical grimace of courts, disgusted with every thing which savours of aristocratic or monarchic parade, and smitten with the love of republican simplicity and honesty, they have fallen into a ruggedness of deportment a thousand times more proud, more intolerable and disgusting, than Shakspeare's foppish lord, with his chin new reapt, and pouncet box. They scorn to conceal their thoughts; and, in the expression of them, confound bluntness with honesty. Their opinions are all *dogmas*. It is perfectly immaterial to them what any one else may think. Nay, many of them seem to have forgotten that others can think or feel at all.' p. 157.

The greater proportion of the cultivated ability in this state, goes, it seems, into the profession of the law, followed by a crowd of supernumeraries without ability,—whose virtues, however, we may hope, will be refined and consolidated, though their lack of talent cannot be supplied, by what is, in any nation, confessedly the best school of conscience, and guardian of rectitude. They will also improve the community; as the multitude of litigations which they may promote, will be but so many casuistical exercises to perfect the moral sense of the people.

It is from this profession, that he has selected several conspicuous characters, for an exhibition of his talent for moral painting. The figures are of great breadth, and evince considerable adroitness at striking out a spirited, dashing sort of representation: how far they are likenesses, we have no means of judging. Accurate likenesses, we may be certain, they cannot all be, in some of the points, from the glaring extravagance of expression, by which prominence and magnitude are attempted to be given to some of the intellectual distinctions. For example:

'He possesses one original and almost supernatural faculty; the faculty of developing a subject by a single glance of the mind, and detecting at once the very point on which every controversy depends. No matter what the question: though ten times more knotty than the "gnarled oak," the lightning of heaven is not more rapid, nor more resistless, than his astonishing penetration. Nor does the exercise of it seem to cost him an effort. On the contrary, it is as easy as vision. I am persuaded that his eyes do not fly over a landscape, and take in its various objects, with more promptitude and facility, than his mind embraces and analyzes the most complex subject.' p. 109.

The personages are anonymous; but if any English reader has such a thing as a Court Calendar of the United States, he may look for the name of the Chief Justice; the number of dots, in place of the words, appearing to indicate that title. With this monstrous power of intellect, he is represented as destitute of imagination, awkward in his person and gestures, and harsh in his enunciation; in all which latter points, he is contrasted



with another distinguished speaker, the Governor of Virginia, whose character is displayed at still greater length, and who is represented as a very showy, rather than a very vigorous or convincing orator.

Without dissenting from every part of the following representation, we may certainly doubt whether it was not written a little in reaction to some discourtesy experienced by the author from his fellow-citizens.

‘ In the national and state legislatures, as well as at the various bars in the United States, I have heard great volubility, much good sense, and some random touches of the pathetic : but in the same bodies, I have heard a far greater proportion of puerile rant, or tedious and disgusting inanity. Three remarks are true as to almost all their orators. First, they have not a sufficient fund of general knowledge. Secondly, they have not the habit of close and solid thinking. Thirdly, they do not aspire at original ornaments. From these three defects it most generally results, that although they pour out, easily enough, a torrent of words, yet these are destitute of the light of erudition, the practical utility of just and copious thought, or those novel and beautiful allusions and embellishments, with which the very scenery of the country is so highly calculated to inspire them.’ p. 46.

The American orators, however, may be very much consoled under the weight of their sentence, when they observe what other speech-makers stand condemned before the same judge. He thus pronounces on one of the name of Cicero : ‘ I have never met with any thing of his which has, according to my taste, deserved the name of superior eloquence.’ And there is another, ycleped Demosthenes, who comes off very little better. In passing sentence on the former, he says, with great dignity, ‘ In reading an oration, it is the mind to which I look. It is the expanse and richness of the conception itself which I regard, and not the glittering tinsel wherein it may be attired. Tully’s orations, examined in this spirit, have, with me, sunk far below the *grade* at which we have been taught to fix them.’ —Should the reader happen to open the book first about this place, he would instantly become sufficiently acquainted with the nature of his author, to feel no sort of surprise at the matchless rant and rodomontade spouted on eloquence and several other subjects. Eloquence is his favourite topic ; and determined, we suppose, to give such a specimen of it himself, as should, by comparison, shame all the world out of their old, silly prejudice in favour of Demosthenes and Cicero, he raves with all the furious extravagance of an inebriated poet-aster. The doctrine (if we may use so sober a word) which forms the burden of this rant, is simply that trite, plain maxim, that it is of great importance towards producing a powerful ef-

fect on the feelings of his auditors, that the orator's own feelings be moved. We are not to harbour any doubt that *this* great orator's feelings were powerfully in action, while he was writing the *eloquent* parts of these letters. If they were, never was exhibited a more striking exemplification of another plain principle—that however indispensable may be the warmth of an orator's own feelings to give effect to his discourse, the energy of feeling alone will be quite unavailing, with intelligent hearers or readers, if that which should be the *sense* of what he is saying, is no better than vain extravagance. We doubt whether there could any where be found better samples than in this book, of composition adapted to excite disgust and derision by the very properties for which its author admired it, the energy, the fire, the pathos, in one word, the *eloquence*, with which the writer meant and deemed it to be irresistibly glowing. There are, especially, two pieces of rant, which surpass all the rest, and probably equal, in absurdity, any thing that ever was ranted. One is concerning the morality of the first occupation of the American soil by the English colonists, and its continued and extending occupation by their posterity; including descants on the previous condition of the Aborigines,—their freedom, their innocence, their happiness, or, to use his own term, their 'bliss;' with descriptions of the emotions and the manners with which they first saw and received our countrymen. There is a degree of reason and justice in the eulogy of the Indian princess Pocahuntas; the rest of the effusion, besides its fallacy as a representation of facts, is a perfect burlesque of fine feeling, lofty morality, and impassioned expression. He probably deemed himself at the very climax of eloquence, in the following affected, and foolish, and profane paragraph:

'Great God! To reflect, my S....., that the authors of all these wrongs were our own countrymen, our forefathers, professors of the meek and benevolent religion of Jesus! Oh! it was impious; it was unmanly; poor and pitiful! Gracious Heaven! what had these poor people done? The simple inhabitants of these peaceful plains, what wrong, what injury, had they offered to the English? My soul melts with pity and shame.' p. 91.

He says, if *he* were President of the United States, he should 'glory in going to the Indians, throwing himself on his knees before them, and saying to them, "Indians, friends, brothers, oh! forgive my countrymen! Deeply have our fathers wronged you; and they have forced us to continue the wrong. Reflect, brothers; it was not our fault that we were born in your country; but now we have no other home; we have no where else to rest our feet. Will you not then permit us to remain? Can you not forgive even us, innocent as we are? If



you can, oh ! come to our bosoms," &c. &c. &c.—He chooses to assume, that this humble attitude and most sentimental address, would infallibly conciliate the rightful lords of the continent to a cordial consent. But, after reading his own description of the spirit which, to this hour, they cherish toward the colonists, we think this a most unwarranted assumption. If that description is correct, they would very probably refuse, which, according to him, they have an absolute right to do. And if they have this right, and should choose to make a practical assertion of it, the intruding population cannot, in morality, have any right to maintain forcible possession. What then? *Fiat justitia*, &c. If our author should at length obtain, by any management, the Presidency of the States, and if, just at the same point of time, the American people should become as awfully respectful and obsequiously loyal as European subjects are to their governors,—that is to say, as all subjects every where ought to be,—we may expect to hear of the whole population of the United States quietly walking into the Atlantic, in a body, with their President at their head, who will be vociferating moral heroics, in American rhetoric, till his life and eloquence are quenched by the insensate waves.

But the maddest extravagance of all, is, a description of the author's sensations on hearing a preacher, of the name of James Waddell, in a remote, obscure part of the country. There is no knowing, nor is it of any consequence, whether the author did really hear a preacher of that name, or did not. The preacher's quoting Rousseau, naming Socrates, and pronouncing an eulogium on the character of Sir Robert Boyle, (as the Spy constantly calls him,) in a kind of barn in the woods of the back settlements, look much like fiction. But, for either matter of fact or fiction, the representation is equally monstrous. It is a most affected and disgusting delirium of mock-elegy, mock-tragedy, and mock-heroic. The few sentences we can afford to admit, will give but an imperfect notion of the thing. The preacher's subject was the Passion of Christ ; the occasion was sacramental ; the preacher was old and blind ; and ' his shrivelled hands and his voice were shaking under the influence of the palsy.'

'The first emotions which touched my breast were those of mingled pity and veneration. But ah ! sacred God ! how soon were all my feelings changed ! The lips of Plato were never more worthy of a prognostic swarm of bees than were those of this holy man !'—'As he descended from the pulpit to distribute the mystic symbols, there was a peculiar, a more than human solemnity, in his air and manner, which made my blood run cold and my whole frame shiver.'—'We saw the very faces of the Jews : the staring, frightful distortions of malice and rage ! We saw the buffet : my soul kindled

with a flame of indignation; and my hands were involuntarily and convulsively clenched!—“Whatever I had been able to conceive of the sublimity of Massillon or the force of Bourdaloue, had fallen far short of the power which I felt from the delivery of this simple sentence. (Rousseau’s sentence, “Socrates died like a philosopher, but Jesus Christ like a God.”) The blood, which just before had rushed in a hurricane upon my brain, and, in the violence and agony of my feelings, had held my whole system in suspense, now ran back into my heart with a sensation which I cannot describe, a kind of shuddering delicious horror! The paroxysm of blended pity and indignation, to which I had been transported, subsided into the deepest self-abasement, humility, and adoration. I had just been lacerated and dissolved by sympathy with our Saviour as a fellow-creature; but now, with fear and trembling, I adored him as—“a God!”” p. 130—6.

It is quite time to dismiss this production, with which nothing could excuse our having occupied so much space, but the English publisher’s assurance, that it has produced a great sensation in America, as a very extraordinary performance. We will confess that we think it does manifest the native faculties of what a right discipline might have made a very considerably able man. But his mind is so ill cultivated, so duped and inflated with a vain notion of its own originality and energy, so insanely fierce for dashing and roaring extravagance, and so totally devoid of good taste, that we fear it betrays a very juvenile state of mental cultivation in the readers of Virginia, to have taken these letters for a splendid exhibition of genius and eloquence.

Various circumstances in the work, tend to shew how far they are behind the old country in what may be called the literary fashions. For instance, this writer talks of the person who called himself Yorick, and of his *Tristram Shandy*, in a way that seems to indicate they are in high vogue at Richmond in Virginia; while here, happily, the worthless man and his worthless books are nearly gone into oblivion.

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Art. VII. *The Corsair*, a Tale. By Lord Byron. 4th edition. 8vo. pp. xii. and 108. 5s. 6d. 1814. Murray.

IN the Dedicatory Preface which is prefixed to this Poem, addressed to Thomas Moore, Esq. his Lordship says ‘I dedicate to you the last production with which I shall trespass on public patience, and your indulgence, for some years.’ He accordingly appears to have reserved himself for this farewell effort of his pen, as if ambitious of realizing the idea expressed by himself, of shining

—‘lovely to the last,  
Extinguished, not decayed.’



“The Corsair” is more vigorously conceived, and more carefully elaborated, than either of his preceding ‘Tales.’ His Lordship has judiciously laid aside, in this production, that bold, but slight, sketchy style, and the correspondent measure, the octo-syllabic, which have of late become so popular: and, in adopting ‘the good old, though now neglected heroic couplet,’ has ably shewn of what variety, majesty, and force it is susceptible. We have sometimes questioned, whether it is the quality of the thoughts which present themselves to the mind of the poet, that previously decides the form in which they shall be embodied; or whether the style and measure, accidentally chosen, may not, in some degree, become the mould to which those thoughts, by expanding or contracting, shape themselves. However this may be, to manage the full harmony of the ten-foot couplet, and to sustain, in each particular line, that perfect but various rhythm, which the measure demands, requires an intellectual effort of a very different kind from that, which is employed in conducting the loose versification of the iambic of eight feet. Whatever vigour may be occasionally thrown into the latter, (for some of the finest specimens of which, we might refer to the *Giaour*,) we think it is ill-adapted for the expression of thoughts of the highest class; and that this want of adaptation, arises partly from the sense the reader has of its ‘fatal facility.’ It does not admit of majesty; and is scarcely better calculated for deep pathos, or tenderness. It is the proper measure for a tale, or a minstrel’s lay: but ‘the Corsair,’ in spite of its title, is something better.

We shall not trouble our readers with the argument of the Poem: perhaps, the tale itself might, in prose, seem hardly worth the telling. It is in the delineation of character that Lord Byron excels almost all his contemporaries, and that, in this instance, he has excelled himself. The Corsair is from the same master-pencil that portrayed the dark, revolting features of Childe Harold; and the subject is of the same cast: but there is more mellowness in the colouring, more of contrast in the character itself, and it is more highly finished.

‘Unlike the heroes of each ancient race,  
Demons in act, but Gods at least in face,  
In Conrad’s form seems little to admire,  
Though his dark eye-brow shades a glance of fire:  
Robust but not Herculean—to the sight  
No giant frame sets forth his common height;  
Yet in the whole, who paused to look again,  
Saw more than marks the crowd of vulgar men:  
They gaze and marvel how—and still confess  
That thus it is, but why they cannot guess.  
Sun-burnt his cheek—his forehead high and pale—  
The sable curls in wild profusion veil;

And oft perforce his rising lip reveals  
 The haughtier thought it curbs, but scarce conceals.  
 Though smooth his voice, and calm his general mien,  
 Still seems there something he would not have seen :  
 His features' deepening lines and varying hue,  
 At times attracted, yet perplex'd the view ;  
 As if within that murkiness of mind  
 Work'd feelings fearful, and yet undefined :  
 Such might it be—that none could truly tell—  
 Too close enquiry his stern glance could quell.  
 There breathe but few whose aspect could defy  
 The full encounter of his searching eye ;—  
 He had the skill, when Cunning's gaze would seek  
 To probe his heart and watch his changing cheek,  
 At once the observer's purpose to espy,  
 And on himself roll back his scrutiny,  
 Lest he to Conrad rather should betray  
 Some secret thought—than drag that chief's to day.  
 There was a laughing Devil in his sneer,  
 That raised emotions both of rage and fear ;  
 And where his frown of hatred darkly fell,  
 Hope withering fled—and Mercy sighed farewell !'  
 ' Yet was not Conrad thus by Nature sent  
 To lead the guilty—guilt's worst instrument.  
 His soul was changed, before his deeds had driven  
 Him forth to war with man and forfeit heaven.  
 Warp'd by the world in Disappointment's school,  
 In words too wise—in conduct *there* a fool—  
 Too firm to yield, and far too proud to stoop,  
 Doom'd by his virtues for a dupe,  
 He curs'd those virtues as the cause of ill,  
 And not the traitors who betrayed him still ;  
 Nor deem'd that gifts bestowed on better men  
 Had left him joy, and means to give again.  
 Fear'd—shunn'd—belied—ere youth had lost her force,  
 He hated man too much to feel remorse,  
 And thought the voice of wrath a sacred call,  
 To pay the injuries of some on all.  
 He knew himself a villain—but he deem'd  
 The rest no better than the thing he seem'd ;  
 And scorn'd the best as hypocrites who hid  
 Those deeds the bolder spirit plainly did.  
 He knew himself detested, but he knew  
 The hearts that loath'd him crouch'd and dreaded too.  
 Lone, wild, and strange, he stood alike exempt  
 From all affection and from all contempt :  
 His name could sadden, and his acts surprise ;  
 But they that fear'd him dared not to despise :  
 Man spurns the worm, but pauses ere he wake  
 The slumbering venom of the folded snake.



'None are all evil—clinging round his heart,  
One softer feeling would not yet depart.  
Oft could he sneer at others as beguil'd  
By passions worthy of a fool or child—  
Yet 'gainst that passion vainly still he strove,  
And even in him it asks the name of Love!  
Yes, it was love—unchangeable—unchanged—  
Felt but for one, from whom he never ranged;  
Though fairest captives daily met his eye,  
He shunn'd, nor sought, but coldly pass'd them by;  
Though many a beauty droop'd in prison'd bower,  
None ever sooth'd his most unguarded hour.  
Yes—it was Love—if thoughts of tenderness,  
Tried in temptation, strengthen'd by distress,  
Unmoved by absence, firm in every clime,  
And yet—Oh more than all!—untired by time—  
Which nor defeated hope, nor baffled wile,  
Could render sullen were she ne'er to smile,  
Nor rage could fire, nor sickness fret to vent  
On her one murmur of his discontent—  
Which still would meet with joy, with calmness part,  
Lest that his look of grief should reach her heart;  
Which nought remov'd—nor menaced to remove—  
If there be love in mortals—this was love!  
He was a villain—aye—reproaches shower  
On him—but not the passion, nor its power,  
Which only proved, all other virtues gone,  
Not guilt itself could quench this loveliest one!' pp. 11—16.

We know nothing in the whole range of English poetry, which transcends this, in beauty and pathos. We must make room for the stanzas, which complete the portrait of this character, and which will put our readers at once in possession of the catastrophe.

'He ask'd no question—all were answer'd now  
By the first glance on that still—marble brow.  
It was enough—she died—what reck'd it how?  
The love of youth, the hope of better years,  
The source of softest joy and tenderest fears,  
The only living thing he could not hate,  
Was reft at once—and he deserv'd his fate,  
But did not feel it less;—the good explore,  
For peace, those realms where guilt can never soar:  
The proud—the wayward—who have fixed below  
Their joy—and find this earth enough for woe,  
Lose in that one their all—perchance a mite—  
But who in patience parts with all delight?  
Full many a stoic eye and aspect stern  
Hide hearts where grief hath little left to learn;  
And many a withering thought lies hid—not lost—  
In smiles that least befit who wear them most.

By those, that deepest feel, are ill-exprest  
 The indistinctness of the suffering breast ;  
 Where thousand thoughts begin to end in one,  
 Which seeks from all the refuge found in none ;  
 No words suffice the secret soul to show,  
 And Truth denies all eloquence to Woe.  
 On Conrad's stricken soul exhaustion prest,  
 And stupor almost lull'd it into rest ;  
 So feeble now—his mother's softness crept  
 To those wild eyes, which like an infant's wept :  
 It was the very weakness of his brain,  
 Which thus confess'd without relieving pain.  
 None saw his trickling tears—perchance, if seen,  
 That useless flood of grief had never been :  
 Nor long they flow'd—he dried them to depart,  
 In helpless—hopeless—brokenness of heart :  
 The sun goes forth—but Conrad's day is dim—  
 And the night cometh—ne'er to pass from him.  
 There is no darkness like the cloud of mind,  
 On Grief's vain eye—the blindest of the blind !  
 Which may not—dare not see—but turns aside  
 To blackest shade—nor will endure a guide !  
 His heart was form'd for softness—warp'd to wrong,  
 Betray'd too early, and beguil'd too long ;  
 Each feeling pure—as falls the dropping dew  
 Within the grot ; like that had harden'd too ;—  
 Less clear, perchance, its earthly trials pass'd,  
 But sunk, and chill'd, and petrified at last.  
 Yet tempests wear, and lightning cleaves the rock ;  
 If such his heart, so shatter'd it the shock.  
 There grew one flower beneath its rugged brow,  
 Though dark the shade—it shelter'd—saved till now.  
 The thunder came—that bolt hath blasted both,  
 The Granite's firmness, and the Lily's growth :  
 The gentle plant hath left no leaf to tell  
 Its tale, but shrunk and wither'd where it fell,  
 And of its cold protector, blacken round  
 But shiver'd fragments on the barren ground !' pp. 91—94,

Why does Lord Byron select such views of nature for his studies ? Why does he delight in giving being, shape, and utterance, chiefly to forms of terror and wildness ? These are questions which are frequently asked, but which we should not have considered ourselves at liberty to reiterate, had not his Lordship, in the Dedicatory Preface, distinctly referred to such inquiries. This he has done in a way which seems the most likely to sanction the surmise, there abruptly evaded, that, in these gloomy creations of his fancy, he has but embodied the qualities and passions of a real existence : not, indeed, in that exact combination which composes the individual character, of



which these shadowy beings are the semblances, but in separate or varied modifications, yet each, essentially, that living self. This surmise will be strengthened by his Lordship's appearing to take complacency in attracting to himself somewhat of those mingled feelings of admiration, pity, abhorrence, and sympathy, which he succeeds in awakening for his characters; as if that egotism, which is supposed to attach to the poet, could be solaced by a consciousness of possessing this unenviable interest in the minds of his readers, more soothing to the sullenness of intellectual pride, than the familiar caresses of affection. Or, perhaps, his Lordship wishes to merge his real character in that of the poet, and to substitute, in place of his conscious self, an imaginary representative bearing his name, with whose features the dark lays of his harp may seem more accordant, than with those of the satirist, or the lighter voluptuary. At any rate, it is with the poet only that we have to do. And here we cannot conceal, that we differ from those who have expressed regret, that Lord Byron has made choice of such subjects. It is no disparagement to his talents to presume, from this very choice, that, in no other, he would have displayed equal originality and depth of thought, or have preserved such fidelity to the truth of nature. He must, indeed, be deeply read in the human heart, and a perfect master of its language, that could, with equal force, convey all the emotions and passions which expand or agitate it. Perhaps, the most difficult to pourtray, though not the best adapted for dramatic effect, are those of a tragic and less mixed character, which must have been felt by ourselves, in order to be understood sufficiently to conciliate our sympathy. The calm repose of evening sunshine is less picturesque, and far less easy to express on the canvas, than the bolder traits of a stormy sky. We think Lord Byron was right in selecting those subjects, which, from whatever accidental circumstance or turn of thought, he was most able to give with accuracy; and our thanks are due to him for the manner in which this has been executed. He has not, like Crabbe, given us living, disgusting anatomies of human nature; nor has he, like the man he calls his friend, arrayed Licentiousness, in the painted charms of sentiment, and thrown over her form, that voluptuous drapery which speaks more than exposure. He has exhibited human nature in the spirit of our best tragic writers, who drew their sketches from history, and, finished them from real life. The interest his characters awaken, is not of that kind, which leads us to view them as abstract personifications of the excellencies of our nature; and, with their feelings or fortunes, to identify our own. They come before us as distinct, historic personages, partaking of that common nature, and existing as outwardly from ourselves, and almost as really, as

the living objects of daily communion ; which we feel, therefore, quite at liberty to observe and scrutinize. This being the case, we conceive, that the characters which Lord Byron has exhibited, are calculated to subserve a highly moral tendency. If in any degree they may lessen our abhorrence of vice, by making our sympathy predominate over the principle, rather than by counteracting its influence, they, at the same time, deepen our conviction of the miseries inseparably connected with a departure from virtue. Did we wish, in the most impressive manner, to exhibit the comfortless, hopeless vacuity of the sceptic's heart, we would cite '*Childe Harold*' as an illustration ; and, from the same volume, we would borrow the most thrilling confession that was ever wrung from the poisoned heart of a libertine, of the dregs which are left behind by the maddening draught of voluptuousness,

- ' — that weariness which springs
- ' From all I meet, or hear, or see :
- ' — That settled ceaseless gloom
- ' The fabled Hebrew wanderer bore ;
- ' That will not look beyond the tomb,
- ' But cannot hope for rest before.'

Our readers will doubtless have, in their recollection, the last verse of the poem alluded to :

- ' Smile on—nor venture to unmask
- ' Man's heart, and view the Hell that's there.'

' *The Giaour*' abounds with passages of a scarcely less striking and instructive nature.

We much doubt, indeed, if there be, in poetry itself, any moral efficiency of a nature calculated to reach those, whose passions indispose them to its reception. In this respect, it may, perhaps, be said of poetry as of music, that ' it feedeth the disposition which it findeth.' The thoughts which the lyrist stirs and quickens within the minds of others, and the feelings which he rouses, must partake of the nature in which they have their source ;—must accord with the dispositions which permanently reside in the individual. If, then, there may be some persons so nearly akin to the characters which Lord Byron has portrayed, that they will exult to find the gloomy or depraved suggestions of their perverted minds, expressed with greater energy and distinctness than they had ever assumed to themselves,—to behold the dark shades of their own thoughts deepened almost to sublimity ;—and if they be tempted to consider that force or beauty of expression, as a justification of the sentiments it envelopes, we cannot, in fairness, admit, that such a tendency is necessarily deducible from his Lordship's productions. It is but justice to say, that there is nothing, so far as we recol-



lect, in his poems, which displays any design, or which is in itself calculated to corrupt the virtuous mind, to raise a guilty glow of pleasure, or to delude the imagination into a love of splendid crime. There is, at least, a highly moral lesson to be deduced, *if the readers please*, from his poetry.

In the poem before us, especially, we discern much that favours this impression: there is, we think, more of virtuous sentiment distributed through its pages, than in the former poems, and something like an approximation, on some points, to right feeling. We give the following as examples:

‘ “ My sole resources in the path I trod  
 “ Were these—my bark—my sword—my love—my God!  
 “ The last I left in youth—he leaves me now—  
 “ And man but works his will to lay me low.  
 “ I have no thought to mock his throne with prayer  
 “ Wrung from the coward crouching of despair:  
 “ It is enough—I breathe—and I can bear.” ’ p. 55.

‘ Oh! too convincing—dangerously dear—  
 In woman’s eye the unanswerable tear!  
 That weapon of her weakness she can wield,  
 To save—subdue—at once her spear and shield.  
 Avoid it—Virtue ebbs and Wisdom errs,  
 Too fondly gazing on that grief of hers!  
 What lost a world, and bade a hero fly?  
 The timid tear in Cleopatra’s eye.  
 Yet be the soft triumvir’s fault forgiven,  
 By this—how many lose not earth—but heaven!  
 Consign their souls to man’s eternal foe,  
 And seal their own to spare some wanton’s woe!’ p. 58.

We must make room for one more extract: it requires no comment from us.

‘ She stopp’d—threw back her dark far-floating hair,  
 That nearly veil’d her face and bosom fair:  
 As if she late had bent her leaning head  
 Above some object of her doubt or dread.  
 They meet—upon her brow—unknown—forgot—  
 Her hurrying hand had left—’twas but a spot—  
 Its hue was all he saw—and scarce withstood—  
 Oh! slight but certain pledge of crime—’tis blood!  
 He had seen battle—he had brooded lone  
 O’er promised pangs to sentenced guilt foreshown—  
 He had been tempted—chastened—and the chain  
 Yet on his arms might ever there remain—  
 But ne’er from strife—captivity—remorse—  
 From all his feelings in their inmost force—  
 So thrill’d—so shuddered every creeping vein  
 As now they froze before that purple stain.

That spot of blood, that light but guilty streak,  
 Had banish'd all the beauty from her cheek !  
 Blood he had viewed—could view unmoved—but then  
 It flow'd in combat, or was shed by men !' pp. 81, 82.

We have thought it unnecessary to say much on the subject of the genius, which is so richly displayed in this, as well as in Lord Byron's former works. Circumstances have contributed to form the public opinion to a just appreciation of his powers : and we have already given our sentence upon this point. We have recognized an evident and rapid progression in his Lordship's intellectual character, at every successive interval of his public appearance. His first pretensions to fame, as 'George Lord Byron, a minor,' were, indeed, very slightly founded : there was little indication, in his early poems, of the eminence to which he was afterwards to attain. His next appearance was as a satirist ; the resource, in general, of unsuccessful talent, or of wounded pride. Of this production Lord Byron seems anxious to suppress all remembrance ; and, certainly, the contrast which it would present to his later professions, and *affectionate dedications*, if rigidly compared, would be somewhat ludicrous and humiliating. There was, however, much in that production, which excited sanguine expectation. Again his Lordship retired behind the scenes, or rather from the stage ; and, on his re-appearance, he seemed to have gained a head and shoulders in intellectual height, and to tower above his compeers ; but his features bore the marks of the 'pilgrimage' which Childe Harold had, in the meanwhile, accomplished. The keen and bitter satirist had been matured into a moralist of kindred mood, but of darker spleen. 'The Giaour,' his Lordship's next production, displayed a power of thought, at least equal to any that had preceded it ; and, passing over the lighter beauties of his next poem, we think 'the Corsair' a still more favourable exhibition of his Lordship's mental character.

Lord Byron now threatens us with another recess. If we might be permitted to frame any hope, in relation to the circumstances of his future appearance, our respect for his Lordship's genius, and the interest which it imparts to his character, would lead us fervently to wish, that the next stage of his progress may conduct him to a point of mental elevation still higher than he has yet attained ;—or rather introduce him to a higher sphere, in which he may find objects more commensurate with the grasp of intellect and the energies of passion. Visionary as the prospect may be, we cannot resist the temptation to indulge ourselves, for a moment, in realizing the glorious emancipation which Christianity would induce on the faculties of so noble a mind. His Lordship must forgive us for characterizing



that, as a bondage the most inglorious, which enchains the desires and the affections to the dust;—a Promethean bondage, by which the struggle of self-will with Heaven is visited, when the soul is doomed to become the prey of its own energies. A cotemporary writer has expressed this idea with singular beauty.—“C’est d’un avenir, dont l’homme a sans cesse besoin. “Les facultés nous devorent comme le vautour de Prométhée, “quand elles n’ont point d’action au dehors de nous.”—“L’ennui véritable, celui des esprits actifs, c’est l’absence d’intérêt pour tout ce qui nous entoure, combinée avec des facultés qui rendent cet intérêt nécessaire : c’est la soif sans la possibilité de se désalterer.” But there is a future suited to the wants of man : he was not “made in vain,” nor placed here in mockery. There is a meaning in those vague desires, which are continually prompting him towards an indefinite object. His destiny explains the mystery of his nature, and solves all the enigmas of his existence. With what ardour, what intensity of interest, might we suppose a mind, to which ‘Childe Harold’ should be allowed to bear any affinity, would embrace the system which explains all these phenomena ; which would unfold to its contemplation realities intrinsically worthy to engage the noblest powers of the soul. Deeply were it to be regretted, that such a mind should be occupied with any thing short of the infinite and the eternal ! The ‘Romaunt’ needs a sequel : the pilgrimage of Childe Harold appears, at present, to be without object, and the rest, in which it should terminate, unknown and undefined. The pilgrim is benighted :

‘There is no darkness like the cloud of mind  
(On inward sight) the blindest of the blind !  
Which (will) not, dare not see, but turns aside  
To blackest shade—nor will endure a guide !’

Where is that sun which could dispel this gloom, and chase away this “winter of the soul ;”—which could revive the withered feelings, the blasted affections of a wounded heart, and give the frost-bound currents of the soul again to flow and sparkle in its beams ? Lord Byron consoles himself, ‘that the man who is alike the delight of his reader and his friends—the poet of all circles—and the idol of his own, permits him to subscribe himself’ his affectionate servant. We should have thought that, to a mind like his Lordship’s, this was but small satisfaction ; that the fame and the favour of that “idol of his circle” would have been far beneath his envy or concern. Our sincere, and certainly disinterested wishes for his Lordship’s consolation and happiness, would compass far nobler objects of ambition ; yet such as are well within the reach of a gifted and energetic mind, were those gifts consecrated to

their noblest purpose, and those energies guided by manly and patriotic feeling : we would wish for his Lordship, and nothing more is necessary than that he should wish it for himself, the civic wreath in addition to the bays he has won ; the gratitude of his countrymen, as well as the respect of posterity ; the enjoyment of that self-esteem which outweighs them all ; and an immortality more glorious than genius can secure, or imagination realize.

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Art. VIII.—*Discourses delivered at the Ordination of the Rev. J. Tait, to the Pastoral Office, at Maldon, Essex, 8vo. pp. 68. Price 2s. Gale and Co. 1813.*

**T**HOSE persons among our readers who have frequently attended upon the religious exercises, which are usually denominated by Protestant Dissenters, “Ordination Services,” cannot have failed to observe, that they generally make a deep impression upon the audience, even when conducted by men of ordinary attainments. It is by no means difficult to account for the powerful interest which they excite, independently of the talents of those who are engaged in them. There is something in the situation of a pious youth, who has just finished his academical career, and is standing on the threshold of the sanctuary, ready to enter upon a work, at once the most arduous and the most honourable, in which a mortal can be employed—who brings the stores of a cultivated and well-furnished mind to the altar of God, and there, before many witnesses, solemnly pledges himself to devote them without reserve to the service of the Redeemer—who shrinks not from the difficulties, the discouragements, the responsibility, and the appalling dangers, that are inseparable from a faithful discharge of the sacred office—there is something in the situation of such a young man, that must awaken the tenderest sympathies of every susceptible mind. But in addition to this principal cause of excitement, the comparative novelty of some of those subjects which are properly brought forward on such occasions,—the solemn personality of the addresses,---and the variety of ministers engaged in delivering them, tend to increase the interest of the whole. Yet, it is obvious that this interest will be for the most part local and temporary ; and *that* which most powerfully excited, when heard, will frequently prove flat and uninteresting, when read. For this reason, it would be both injudicious and superfluous to submit the greater part of ordination discourses to the test of public opinion.

But this remark is far from being applicable to the series of



discourses contained in the pamphlet before us, all of which rise considerably above the usual level, and one of which it appears to us, stands pre-eminent. The first is an Introductory Discourse by the Rev. S. Morell, illustrative of the principles upon which Dissenting Churches are constituted, and by which they are governed, and which are stated with a distinctness that is calculated to instruct, and a liberality that must be approved, even by those who differ most widely in sentiment. The next is a summary of Christian doctrine, (called somewhat improperly, we conceive, *the confession*;) delivered by the candidate for ordination, in which an explicit avowal is made of his belief in all those leading articles of *revealed truth*, which are usually denominated *evangelical*; purified indeed from those technical and scholastic terms which tend rather to obscure than to elicit truth. But that which constitutes the principal attraction of this interesting pamphlet, is the *charge*, or pastoral address to the recently-ordained minister, by the Rev. Dr. Smith. In this address, pastoral fidelity is so happily blended with parental tenderness, the sound instructions of an able Theological Tutor, are so agreeably combined with the simplicity of thought and expression requisite in a preacher of the gospel---that we could most sincerely wish it were in the possession of every Christian Minister, whether aged or young, whether within or without the pale of the national establishment. From this excellent discourse we shall give an extract, not as possessing superior merit, but as exhibiting a fair specimen of the whole; and exemplifying that species of didactic eloquence, which befits the solemnity of the occasion.

‘Yours will be the sacred effort to raise the minds of your hearers to the only True God, the glorious origin of all that is good, the high object of all true religion. You have this morning borne a solemn testimony to the greatness, and purity, and loveliness of the Eternal Majesty; and I doubt not that your expressions were the utterance of the heart. O let their unspeakable import ever fill your own soul, and be thence poured forth into the souls of your people! Lead them, my brother, to the reverential and affectionate contemplation of his perfections, as displayed in his universal providence, shining with richer lustre in the cross of redemption and the experience of the christian, and hereafter to be the object of the believer’s sweetest intimacy and perfect conformity in the heavenly state.—Assert the honors of his righteous government. Exalt his law, as holy, just and good. Clearly prove and strongly enforce the spirituality of its import, the equity of all its precepts, the broad extent of the obedience which it requires, and the perpetuity of its obligation. Unveil the retributions of the world to come. Declare the judgment of the dread tribunal. Shun not to denounce the

terrors of the Lord. Tremble yourself, and teach your hearers to tremble, at the damnation of hell. O be not a party to the diabolical delusion, "Ye shall not surely die!" Be it even your lowest care, to say with confidence that none have descended from under the sound of your voice, untaught, unimplored, unwarned, to the abyss of everlasting punishment, "where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched!" Dwell, also, on the theme of the believer's most joyful hope. Lead your flock to the heavenly pastures. Let them anticipate the society of the blessed; and piercing the interposing shade of death, let their faith behold "the innumerable company of angels, the general assembly and church of the first born, God the Judge of all, and Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant."

'But, with the perfections and the government of God, fail not to exalt the glories of his grace. Soar on the pinions of revealed truth, and carry the minds of your hearers to the first cause of salvation and of every good, the eternal, sovereign, free, and undeserved love of God. Let them behold its immortal activity, and its wondrous operations, in the election of grace, in the counsels of peace, in the transcendent gift of the Saviour, in the new creating work and ever-abiding influences of the Holy Spirit, and in the invitations and promises of the everlasting gospel. O make most prominent in your preaching, these glories of unutterable love! Proclaim these unsearchable riches of Christ. Warn, command, persuade, invite, interest all whom your vocal or your silent influence can reach; that they may, without one moment's delay come to Christ for mercy, pardon, peace, and life. Assure them of his power and his readiness to save sinners, even the chief. Lift high his cross, to attract them to him: and proclaim aloud the message of his authority and grace, "Whosoever will, let him come and take the water of life freely!"

'Nor, while you pour the copious streams of holy truth, will you be unmindful of the mysterious manner of the divine existence. You have justly observed, that it is no less impious to withhold belief from what God has revealed, than to refuse obedience to his explicit commands. O display the glory of the Divine Father; his sovereign majesty, his legislative authority, his all-originating benevolence! And "as you honor the Father, even so honor the Son," the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person. Exalt the Messiah as "over all, God blessed for ever." Preach the reality and the holy perfection of his human nature. Shew that "he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." Dwell often, tenderly, and largely, on his holy life and his agonizing sufferings. Teach reconciliation, forgiveness, and acceptance, through the atonement of his blood, and the merit of his righteousness. Explain the evidence and the designs of his resurrection, the glory of his mediatorial kingdom, his power, his compassion, and his fidelity, as a Prince and a Saviour. Look to the exalted Jesus, as the Source of Strength for every trial and duty; and teach your people to do so likewise. You will possess the secret of happiness and usefulness, if you realize the feelings of our christian poet:



Thou art the Source and Centre of all minds,  
 Their only point of rest,—ETERNAL WORD!  
 From Thee departing, we are lost and rove  
 At random, without honor, hope, or end.  
 From Thee is all that soothes the life of man;  
 His high endeavour, and his glad success,  
 His strength to suffer, and his will to serve.  
 Thou art, of all thy gifts, THYSELF the crown!

COWPER.'

The last of the Series of discourses, is a sermon "the hearing ear," &c. by the Rev. S. Newton, which is characterized by much originality of thought, couched in plain, nervous, and impressive language.

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Art. IX. *A View of the Pleasures arising from a love of Books*: in Letters to a Lady. By the Rev. Edward Mangin, M. A. Author of the Life of Malesherbes, from the French; Oddities and Outlines, George the Third, a Novel; an Essay on Light Reading, &c. fcap. 8vo. pp. vi. 268. Price 6s. Longman and Co. London, and Upham, Bath. 1814.

WE wish to give the Rev. Mr. Mangin fair play, and have, therefore, accurately transcribed the whole of his title-page. We do not say it is the most amusing page in the volume; but booksellers and authors both know that the title-page is often the most important: for instance, it may often tempt to the purchase, though not always to the perusal, of a volume like the present. From the Reverend Author of 'Oddities and Outlines' and 'an Essay on Light Reading,' the person whose eye has been caught by the neat display of words in front of the work, and who has stopped to read the motto so happily chosen, "Sweet rills of thought that cheer the conscious soul," will naturally expect something light and amusing; and if, glancing at the foot of the page, he should observe that Bath shares in the honour of the publication, he will as naturally associate with that circumstance, a pretty correct idea of the polite coterie in which this elegantly printed volume aspires to circulate. The work is represented to have originated in 'Letters to a Lady,' 'whose proper pride (there is something pretty in the expression) induced her to request that the author in writing to her, would compliment her so far (good again!) as to suppose her capable of relishing subjects of rather a higher order than the state of the weather and the markets; or the misdeemeanors, quarrels, and rash marriages of his neighbours. It was accordingly and very gladly resolved, &c.' The writer (we are told) thinks, (and here we are still happy to agree with

him) 'that men are not sufficiently solicitous to do justice, 'either in *their letters*, or general behaviour, to the *importance* of the *female character*.' The latter part of the sentence is not so much in our style of thought. 'He is of opinion that 'it would become them more to adopt, what the poet says was 'the gallant and elevated sentiment of the Aboriginal Briton, 'who

"Deemed some effluence of th' omniscient mind

"In woman's beauteous image lay inshrined."

We shall content ourselves with illustrating the first part of this sentiment, by the following extracts from the work.

'That such reading as I have last spoken of (history) affords useful instruction, may be alleged; as it may that it is pleasant to be instructed: but after all, the feelings of ordinary readers talk a different language; and *common consent* cries out in favour of somewhat less *wise*, and more entertaining. The mind which demands amusement, gives a warmer welcome to the *gossiping*, and (if it must be so,) the unprofitable and unphilosophical page of the antiquarian enthusiast, and the homely biographer; to the black-letter ballad, and the domestic anecdote; to the light effusion of the essayist, or the volume of poetry, which, without enlarging our knowledge, appeals to, and perhaps improves, the best sensibilities of our hearts, than it ever does to the most sublime dissertations of Smith or Gibbon; or any name equally celebrated!!' pp. 150—1.

'It might appear too bold a declaration, were I to assert that such extracts as the preceding (from Milton and Thomson) or extracts of any kind, or the works from which they are taken, would tend to heal a *broken heart*, or to correct a *bad* one; neither is it probable that the victim of affliction, remorse, or bodily pain, would, in such effusions, find enough to attract his attention,' &c. p. 127.

'None but the *initiated* can conceive how many and how great are the pleasures which books afford; and this will appear more strikingly true, if we advert to the numerous points of view in which a volume may be considered, independently of its specific character; and solely as the form in which the workings of the human mind are enveloped; the means whereby the thoughts of one intellectual being are transmitted to another.' p. 129.

'Books should be considered as companions,—whether for example, the writings of STERNE will bear the test. They are, perhaps, as generally known, as frequently reprinted in different forms, and as constantly read among us [US?] as those of any modern English author.'

The Rev. Mr. Mangin having confessed that 'in his allusions to sacred subjects, it is not saying too much to aver that he (Sterne) now and then approaches the confines of blasphemy; and besides, not only never misses, but incessantly creates op-



portunities for the introduction of gross ideas ;—proceeds to state to his *fair* correspondent, that

‘there is hardly a book in the English language *more strictly applicable to the present design* than Sterne’s *Sentimental Journey*, of which *I shall therefore take a larger view* than I can allow myself of some other works! The popularity of the ‘*Journey*’ has been rather increased than diminished by time.’ p. 92.

It is hardly worth while to notice, *en passant*, that this is notoriously untrue. We must make room for two more extracts, which will connect themselves with the preceding.

‘A taste for books, I have formerly observed, is probably conducive to a more important end than that of rendering our mortal condition tolerable. I have ventured to surmise that the love of books, *properly directed*, operates as a preparative for that mighty change we shall undergo, when we have done

“With this our day of proof, our land of hope,”

and are called upon to pass into regions of IMMORTALITY.’  
pp. 257—9.

‘Although we cannot form any conjecture as to the kind of happiness we are to expect in our eternal state’——p. 266.

Enough, enough. ‘Letters to a Lady, by the *Rev. E. Mangin, A.M.!!*’ The subject becomes too grave for ridicule. ‘Whatever may be the character of the writing from which they originate,’ says this gentleman, ‘the *reflexions* accompanying the perusal of a book, are the sources of our literary pleasures.’ The reflexions suggested by the perusal of this book, certainly constitute its only recommendation, but these are the source of any thing but pleasure.

Art. X. *Carmen Triumphale*, for the commencement of the year 1814. By Robert Southey, Esq. Poet Laureat. 4to. pp. 32. Price 3s. 6d. Longman and Co. London, 1814.

[F it be necessary, for the glory of the British Court, to have a Poet Laureat, we presume it is equally so, that he should be a man of genius, and that the emoluments of the office should be worthy of the munificence of the Sovereign. We recollect no living bard, who has more ability to confer honour on the bays, or less occasion to seek honour from princes, than Mr. Southey. But, we think some objections lie against the place itself, considered in its present degraded state, as being beneath the dignity of the court to offer to a man of transcendent intellect,—not to say whether it be not beneath the dignity of such a man to accept it. From the

manner in which its duties have hitherto been performed, the office can confer on him who holds it but a small portion of credit, inferior even to its scanty emolument. To furnish laudatory odes, at certain seasons, appears to be a servile duty; yet surely the annals of this country, in an age so fruitful of great events as the present, might, twice a-year, supply themes, on which the noblest talents might be happily employed in the small compass of an ode. A hundred pounds and a butt of sack, were, we confess, monstrous overpayment for such annual strains of stupefying praise as Cibber, Whitehead, and Pye, were wont to pour into the ear of royalty, being after the rate of twenty shillings a line for pigmy lyrics. Brevity, indeed, was their principal merit; a merit of no ordinary size in dull poetry, which, like a humming-top, spins the longest when it sleeps; for, when the quality of poetry is indifferent, the quantity cannot be too small. Mr. Southey's booksellers might not perhaps venture to purchase the copyright of his best verses at the royal price; yet, considered as being the bounty of a great monarch, which ought to reflect lustre on himself, and for such services as might be rendered by a poet of high order, the remuneration is mean. In the reign of James I. a hundred pounds a year were adequate to the support of one of his Majesty's servants in ease and affluence, according to the style of those days; and a butt of sack, even in the present day, is quite as much wine, as any poet, accustomed to purer and more delightfully exhilarating draughts from Helicon, could well drink, yet probably far too little for "rare Ben Jonson," to whom this inspiring perquisite was first awarded. To continue the same stipend, from generation to generation, while the modes and expences of living are progressively changing and increasing, is to sink the office lower and lower in poverty, and consequently into disrepute, the inevitable attendant on splendid poverty. On a recent occasion, the Court has done only half a good deed,—it has conferred the laurel on a man unquestionably worthy to wear it; but to have done the whole, and to have done it well, it ought to have made the emolument equivalent to a hundred pounds in the days of Old Ben; and also, to have given the poet a *carte blanche*, to be filled up in respect both to time and subject, according to his own judgement. That no degrading conditions have been imposed on Mr. Southey, we have the evidence of his first Ode now before us, in which there is not a line of flattery to the great personage who at present exercises the sovereign authority, and to whom an expression of gratitude for the appointment, could neither have been unseasonable nor reprehensible. The poem is wholly



national; and Mr. Southey has conferred, both on his Royal Patron and on himself, the highest honour, by coming out as the Poet Laureat of the British Isles rather than of Carlton House.

But ought a man of integrity and independence of mind to accept such a post? Upon this point we do not think ourselves competent to say any thing decisive. Yet there does not appear, at least, to us, any sufficient reason that should influence a highly gifted and truly honest man to reject it, if proffered to him. The discussion of this question, may, however, well be suspended, till there be another vacancy;—a vacancy which, we sincerely hope, will not take place in our day. A man, of whose integrity and independence of mind we have always entertained an exalted opinion, notwithstanding some change in the tone of his politics, has accepted the post, and long may he live to celebrate the glories of his country,—once, and *but* once more in war, and ever after in peace and prosperity. Since the time of Dryden, the Court has not bestowed the bays on any poet comparable to Mr. Southey. Warton alone deserved the name; and yet we have never felt that he was a poet of Nature's making, but such an one as any man of mind and study can make of himself by patient brooding within the walls of a college. A king is always a king, a poet always a poet. The actor who assumes the dignity of a monarch, however excellently he may sustain it, is a monarch only while he is performing the part: as soon as that is finished, he returns into himself, or transmigrates into another character. But he who inherits a throne is, at all times, and under all circumstances, like poor mad Lear, "every inch a king." He, too, who is born a poet, is a poet in all things, in prose as well as in verse, in his greatest failures as well as in his most glorious performances. In every production of his mind there is the peculiar form of thought, habit of feeling, and tone of expression, which belong to him exclusively, and distinguish him unequivocally from the man who merely loves poetry, and practises it as an art,—who is a poet only when he *acts* a poet's part. Mr. Southey is eminently a poet, in the first sense of the term as we have used it: Mr. Warton was one in the second sense. In his *History of English Poetry*, Warton is thoroughly the critic and the antiquary; he understands, admires, and loves his subject; but if he had never written a line of metre, we doubt whether he would have written a line of those three heavy quartos otherwise than as it is written. Southey, who busies himself with literature in every shape, whether he writes history, biography, criticism, romance, or "*Omniana*," inevitably

shews himself to be a poet ; for though he may occasionally be prosaic in his poetry, he is always poetical in his prose ; we do not mean ostentatiously, or even meritoriously so, but that he treats all these subjects as no one but a poet would treat them. We therefore augur well of the laureatship during his reign ; for though his periodical lyrics should be deemed tame in comparison with the choice themes of his heart, into which he has breathed his whole soul, they will still be of a character far superior to the feeble, cold, and insipid effusions of ordinary laureats, and possess more natural interest than the gorgeous pageants exhibited by Warton's Gothic Muse.

It was a perilous experiment to take so long a first flight as the new Laureat has done in his *Carmen Triumphale*. We remember no precedent, except the late Mr. Pye's *Carmen Seculare*, on the commencement of the present century, of which we now recollect nothing but the first two lines, and that there were several hundreds equally energetic and sublime.

“ Incessant down the stream of Time,  
“ And days, and years, and ages roll.”

In his attempt to give a poetical bird's eye view of the progress of “ the deliverance of Europe,” from the time that Spain, aided by Britain, unexpectedly made a stand against the usurpation of Bonaparte, and turned the tide of fortune against him, from the straits of Gibraltar to the shores of the Baltic, Mr. Southey has succeeded as well as poetical talent could be expected to succeed. A good political poem, we think, does not exist. Even in Lucan's *Pharsalia*, (which, however, is rather an *historical* romance,) the patriotism overpowers the poetry : and what can be made of a chronicle in verse of modern warfare, of which the scene alternately lies in Spain, Germany, Holland, and Russia, and remains in neither long enough to make the reader feel at home in it ? The sentiments, personages, and events, the hopes and fears, speculations and realities, contemplated or described in this multifarious composition, are so immediately connected with politics,—the politics of to-day, or rather the politics of yesterday, for to-day every interest in the war centres in the heart of France itself,—that all the fine “ ideal,” the quickening, invisible, undefinable spirit of poetry, is lost, or so mingled with grosser matter, as to be rarely felt, and perceived with difficulty, amidst the tumult of ordinary sensations excited by the public details of these events ;—from which details we have received our first and strongest impressions of them. We do not intend the whole weight of our objections to bear against Mr. Southey. We entertain an opinion of his *Song of Victory* far



more favourable than has yet been publicly expressed ; but we regret that he should spend his strength in beating the air from Lisbon to Moscow, and from Moscow to Amsterdam, instead of displaying his admirable powers to the highest advantage in a narrower compass. When we see a poem, equally long and excursive, accomplishing all that has been unreasonably expected of Mr. Southey, we will judge him by *that* as a standard. Filicaja's two Odes, on the siege of Vienna, and that addressed to Sobiesky, King of Poland, rank among the noblest lyrics of any age or country ; but there is an undistracted interest, a perfect unity in the subject of the former two, while the latter is a crown of glory to both. Had Filicaja himself attempted to sketch in rhyme the history of Europe for only twelve months, he would not have succeeded better than our countryman has done in his poetical retrospect of five years.

Of all the forms of verse which Mr. Southey has attempted, we think he shines least in the Ode. His measures are frequently slow, interrupted, or inharmonious. In the work before us, abounding with vigorous, manly, and patriotic sentiments, the diction, the pauses, the turns, and the whole strain of argument, are rather those of eloquence than of poetry. The following lines will illustrate our meaning, and also discover the politics of the piece: the latter, however, we shall not presume to criticise.

‘ O virtue, which above all former fame,  
     Exalts her venerable name !  
 O joy of joys for every British breast !  
 That with that mighty peril full in view,  
 The Queen of Ocean to herself was true !  
 That no weak heart, no abject mind possess'd  
 Her counsels, to abase her lofty crest,—  
 Then had she sunk in everlasting shame,—  
 But ready still to succour the oppress'd,  
 Her Red-Cross floated on the waves unfurl'd,  
 Offering redemption to the groaning world.  
 First from his trance the heroic Spaniard woke ;  
     His chains he broke,  
 And casting off his neck the treacherous yoke,  
 He call'd on England, on his generous foe :  
     For well he knew that wheresoe'er  
 Wise policy prevailed, or brave despair,  
 Thither would Britain's succours flow,  
     Her arm be present there.  
 Then too regenerate Portugal display'd  
 Her ancient virtue, dormant all-too-long.  
     Rising against intolerable wrong,

Southey's *Carmen Triumphale*.

On England, on her old ally for aid  
 The faithful nation call'd in her distress :  
 And well that old ally the call obey'd,  
 Well was her faithful friendship then repaid.' pp. 7, 8.

The following is incomparably the grandest stanza in the poem.

' From Spain the living spark went forth ;  
 The flame hath caught, the flame is spread !  
 It warms,—it fires the farthest North.  
 Behold ! the awaken'd Moscovite  
 Meets the Tyrant in his might ;  
 The Brandenburg, at Freedom's call,  
 Rises more glorious from his fall ;  
 And Frederic, best and greatest of the name,  
 Treads in the path of duty and of fame.  
 See Austria from her painful trance awake !  
 The breath of God goes forth,—the dry bones shake !  
 Up Germany !—with all thy nations rise !  
 Land of the virtuous and the wise,  
 No longer let that free, that mighty mind,  
 Endure its shame ! She rose as from the dead,  
 She broke her chains upon the oppressor's head—  
 Glory to God ! Deliverance for Mankind !' pp. 16, 17.

Though the march of the numbers in this magnificent stanza is at first heavy, there is a rising gradation of thought, language, harmony, interest, and emotion, amidst the changes of scene, subject, and imagery, to the very last line, when

' Glory to God ! Deliverance for Mankind !'

is sounded forth with a voice of music and of power, that might "create a soul under the ribs of death." Three such stanzas would have constituted a finer New Year's Ode than we have ever met with from a Poet Laureat's pen. Further criticism and quotation are equally unnecessary, the Poem itself having been made universally public by the periodical press.



## ART. XI. SELECT LITERARY INFORMATION.

*\*\* Gentlemen and Publishers who have works in the press, will oblige the Conductors of the ECLECTIC REVIEW, by sending Information (post paid) of the subject, extent, and probable price of such works; which they may depend upon being communicated to the public, if consistent with its plan.*

Dr. Henry Herbert Southey has nearly ready for publication, *Observations on Pulmonary Consumption*. In 1 vol. 8vo.

Mr. Saurey is preparing for publication, the *Morbid Anatomy of the Brain in Mania and Hydrophobia*; with the Pathology of the two Diseases, and experiments to ascertain the presence of water in the Ventricles and Pericardium; collected from the papers of the late Dr. Andrew Marshall, Lecturer on Anatomy in London; with a Biographical Sketch of his Life.

In the course of April will be published, Part I. of *Archaica*. Containing a Reprint of scarce old English Tracts, with Prefaces and Notes, Critical and Biographical. The *Archaica* will be handsomely printed in quarto.

Also in the press, and speedily will be published, Part I. of *Heliconia*. Containing a Reprint of the most scarce and curious Collections of our old English Poetry, first published in the reign of Queen Elizabeth; with Notes, Biographical and Illustrative. By Thomas Park, F.S.A. and other Gentlemen most conversant in that branch of Literature. The *Heliconia* will be handsomely printed in quarto. These two collections of the *Archaica* and *Heliconia* will mutually illustrate each other; and according to the plan proposed for editing them, will form a singularly interesting body of Old English Literature. As the impression of the *Archaica* and *Heliconia* will be limited to two hundred copies; gentlemen who wish to possess these works, are requested to lose no time in communicating their names to the publishers, otherwise it will be impossible to insure them copies.

Lord Lauderdale is preparing a pamphlet on the Corn Laws.

The Third number of *Daniel's Voyage round Great Britain*, illustrated

with coloured prints, will be ready for publication on the 2d of April.

Matthew Montagu, esq. is preparing a third portion, or volumes V. and VI. of *Letters of Mrs. Elizabeth Montagu*, and some of her correspondents.

Lord Thurlow is preparing for publication, the *Doge's Daughter*, a poem, with several translations from Anacreon and Horace.

Dr. Adams has put to the press, his long projected work on the erroneous opinions and consequent terrors usually entertained concerning Hereditary Diseases.

Mr. John Craig will soon publish, *Elements of Political Science*, in three octavo volumes.

Viscount Dillon has in the press, in a quarto volume, *Tactica*; being the System of War of the Grecians, according to Ælian, with the notes of commentators, explanatory plates, and a preliminary discourse.

Mr. Nichols's Continuation of the *Literary Anecdotes to the year 1800*, from the numerous additions with which he has been favoured, will extend to two volumes, one of which may be expected early in May.

Dr. Benjamin Heyne, who has been for several years in the confidential service of the East-India Company, is preparing to publish, *Tracts, Statistical and Historical, on India*.

The Rev. Henry Kett has in the press, in two small volumes, the *Flowers of Wit*, or a select collection of *Bon Mots*, with biographical and critical remarks; to which are added some gasconades, puns, and bulls.

Dr. Burnett, late physician to the Mediterranean fleet, has in the press, a practical Account of the Mediterranean Fever; also the History of Fever

during 1810 to 1813, and of the Gibraltar and Carthage Fevers.

Dr. Badham, physician to the Duke of Sussex, has in the press, an Essay on those Diseases of the Chest which have their seat in the Mucus Membrane, Larynx, or Bronchæ.

A selection of Old Plays, in fifteen octavo volumes, with biographical notices, and critical and explanatory notes, by Mr. Octavius Gilchrist, founded on Dodsley's Old Plays, and edited by Mr. Isaac Reed, is preparing for publication.

Dr. Lloyd is engaged on a complete translation of Valerius Maximus, which he purposes to print in a quarto volume.

Mr. Charles Pope has nearly ready for publication, an entirely new edition, greatly improved, of his Practical Abridgement of the Custom and Excise Laws.

A new edition of Fitzosborne's Letters on several Subjects, written by Wm. Melmoth, esq. is printing in an octavo volume.

A second edition of Mr. Baker's Translation of Livy, in six volumes octavo, is in the press.

The Rev. Robert Stevens, of the Asylum and Magdalen, has nearly ready for the press, a volume of Sermons, calculated for general reading.

Mr. John Pinkerton has nearly completed his General Collection of Voyages and Travels; forming a complete His-

tory of the Origin and Progress of Discovery, by Sea and Land, from the earliest Ages to the present Time. Embellished with 200 Engravings, in 17 Vols. 4to.

On the 2d of April will appear, Historical Sketches of Politics and Public Men, for the Year 1813-14. (To be continued Annually.) In One Volume, 8vo.

Mr. John Dunlop has completed the History of Fiction; being a Critical Account of the most celebrated Prose Works of Fiction, from the earliest Greek Romances to the Novels of the present Age, in Three Volumes, post 8vo.

Mr. Arthur Clifford, Editor of the Sadler's State Papers, and of the Tixall Poetry, has in the Press a New Work, entitled Tixall Letters, or the Correspondence of the Aston Family and their Friends during the Seventeenth Century. This Work, which will consist of 2 Vols. 12mo. will appear early in June.

In the press, The Rape of Proserpine, and other Poems, translated from the Latin of Claudian: with a Prefatory Discourse and Occasional Notes. By Jacob George Strutt, Esq. Elegantly printed in 8vo.

The 4th Volume of Wilson's History of Dissenting Churches may be expected in the course of the present Month.

A Rural Poem, entitled "A Sketch from Nature," is in the press, and will shortly appear.

## Art. XII. LIST OF WORKS-RECENTLY PUBLISHED.

### BIOGRAPHY.

An Historial and Critical account of the Lives and Writings of James I, Charles I, and of the Lives of Oliver Cromwell and Charles II, after the manner of Bayle, from original writers and state papers. By William Harris, D.D. To which is now added, (to complete the collection of Dr. Harris's works) the Life of Hugh Peters, 5 vols. 8vo. 3l. bds.

General Biography, by Dr. Aikin and Mr. Johnston, Vol. 9. 4to. 2l. 2s.

Chalmers's Biographical Dictionary, Vol. 14. 8vo. 12s.

### EDUCATION.

P. Virgilii Maronis Opera, in fidem optimorum Exemplarium castigata. 18mo. 4s.

Sermons, adapted to the use and perusal of Schools, for every Sunday in the year, by the Rev. S. Barrow, 12mo. 7s.

The Arithmetical Preceptor, in 5 parts, by Joseph Youle, 12mo. 5s. bds.

### LAW.

A Narrative respecting the various Bills which have been framed for regulating the Law of Bankruptcy in Scotland, 8vo. 2s. 6d.

Law of Auctions, or the Auctioneer's Practical Guide; by T. Williams, Esq. 12mo. 4s. 6d.

The Pocket Companion to the Law of Bills of Exchange, Promissory Notes, checks, drafts, &c. &c. To which are added, Tables of the Stamp Duties, &c. By the editor of the Legal and Literary Journal, 2s. 6d.



MEDICINE AND CHIRURGERY.

A Treatise on Hydronephalus, or Dropsy of the Brain. By James Carmichael Smith, M.D. &c. 8vo. 6s.

Lectures on Comparative Anatomy; in which are explained the Preparations in the Hunterian Collection. By Sir Everard Home, Bart. F.R.S. Serjeant Surgeon to the King, Senior Surgeon to St. George's Hospital, and Honorary Professor to the Royal College of Surgeons. Illustrated by 132 Engravings by Basire, after Drawings by Mr. Clift. 2 vol. 4to. 7l. 7s. bds.

MILITARY.

A Treatise on the Defence of Fortified Places; by Mr. Carnot. Translated from the French, by Lieut. Col. Baron de Montalembert, 8vo. 8s.

MISCELLANEOUS.

An Abridgement of Brady's Clavis Calendaria; on a complete analysis of the Calendar, Illustrated by Ecclesiastical, Historical, and Classical Anecdotes. 12mo. 10s. 6d. bds.

The First Nine Reports of the British and Foreign Bible Society, 1805 to 1813 inclusive; uniformly printed in two thick volumes, 8vo. Price of Vol. I. 3s. 6d. Vol. II. 4s. 6d. extra boards.

Select Extracts of Correspondence since the Publication of the Ninth Annual Report. Price 8d.

An Address, explanatory of the Principles, Views, and Exertions of the British and Foreign Bible Society. Extracted from the First Report of the Auxiliary Bible Society of Stirlingshire and its vicinity. Price 8d.

A New Dutch Grammar, with Practical Exercises; containing also a Vocabulary, Dialogues, Idioms, Letters, &c. By J. B. D'Hassendonck, M.A. Price 6s.

Zenobia, Queen of Palmyra; a Narrative founded on History. By the Author of Patriarchal Times. 2 Volumes duodecimo. Price 12s. in bds.

A New Analysis of Chronology, in which an attempt is made to explain the History and Antiquities of the Primitive Nations of the World, and the Prophecies relating to them, on Principles tending to remove the Imperfection and Discordance of preceding Systems. By the Rev. William Hales, D. D. Rector of Killesandra, in Ireland. 4 vols. 4to. 8l. 8s. bds.

An Abstract of the Annual Reports and Correspondence of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, from the Commencement of its Connection with the East India Missions, A.D. 1709, to the present day; together with the Charges delivered to the Missionaries, at different periods, on their departure for their several Missions. 8vo. 13s. boards.

POETRY.

Orlando in Roncevalles, a Poem in 5 Cantos. By I. H. Merrivale, Esq. crown 8vo. 8s. 6d.

The Legend of Iona, with other Poems. By Walter Paterson. 8vo. 12s.

Sortes Horatianæ, a Poetical Review of Poetical Talent, &c. with notes, 12mo. 6s. 6d.

Pleasures of Pity, and other Poems. By Ferdinand Fullerton Western, Esq. 4to. 1l. 11s. 6d.

POLITICAL.

Napoleon's Conduct towards Prussia since the Peace of Tilsit, from the original Documents published by Order of the Prussian Government. Translated from the German, with an Appendix and Anecdotes by the Editor.

Russia or the Crisis of Europe; with an Account of the Russian Campaign, 6s.

Greenfell's Observations on the Expediency and Facility of a Copper Coinage of Uniform Weight and a Standard Value, 1s.

A Letter to Matthew Gregson, Esq. treasurer of the Blue Coat School, Liverpool; by the Rev. R. Blacow, B. A. 1s.

THEOLOGY AND SACRED LITERATURE.

Part I. of a Hebrew, Latin and English Dictionary: containing all the Hebrew and Chaldee words used in the Old Testament, arranged under one alphabet, &c. By Joseph Samuel C. F. Frey. Royal 8vo. 12s.

The Prophecy of Ezekiel concerning Gog, the last Tyrant of the Church, his Invasion of Ros, his discomfiture, and final fall; examined, and in part illustrated. By Granville Penn, Esq. fcp. 8vo. 6s.

Lawrence's Remarks upon the Systematical Classification of Manuscripts; adopted by Griesbach, in his Edition of the Greek Testament. 8vo. Price 5s.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

\*\*\* The length to which the Critique on Dr. Williams's work has unexpectedly extended, compels us to reserve many articles of literary information till our next number. We were unwilling to divide the first article, it being a continuation of what appeared in our January number: we feel persuaded that the importance of the subjects which it discusses, will amply atone with our readers, for the unusual portion of our pages which it occupies.

We have received a letter with the signature X, and feel ourselves much obliged to the unknown writer. We hope that our future numbers will furnish the best reply to his friendly suggestion.

If the Friend who signs himself Justitius will acquaint the Publisher with his real name and address, his communication shall be immediately attended to.

We have pleasure in laying before our readers the following communication from the Rev. A. Creak, relative to the question, which has been lately agitated, as to Dr. Watts's latest sentiments, on the doctrine of the Trinity.

*To the Editor of the Eclectic Review.*

Dear Sir,

Yarmouth, March 18, 1814.

As a Pamphlet, entitled "A faithful Enquiry after the Ancient and Original Doctrine of the Trinity taught by Christ and his Apostles," has been involved in the recent discussions respecting the genuine sentiments of Dr. Watts, I will thank you to insert the following remarks upon it.

It was prepared for the press, and a small edition of it was taken off, in the year 1745. The whole of this edition, with the exception of a very few copies, was destroyed, in consequence, as tradition informs us, of the representations of some of the Doctor's friends. Since the publication of the *Eclectic Review* of the late Rev. Mr. Palmer's piece on this subject, I have been favoured, through the kindness of Joseph Parker, Esq. of Mettingham, Suffolk, with the perusal of Dr. Watts's printed copy of the Enquiry, &c. On the outside of it, there are written, with his own hand, the words "not corrected fully;" and, in the body of it, there are twelve erasements and interlineations. Several of them are merely verbal, and no one of them is of the least possible importance in the controversy respecting his sentiments.

As Mr. Parker's father was amanuensis to Dr. Watts, his family and some of his connexions are well acquainted with the Doctor's hand-writing, and are qualified, if it were necessary, to give the most satisfactory parole evidence, derived from the purest traditionary sources, of the Doctor's reputed and substantial orthodoxy.

The particulars which have been just recited, will, it is presumed, be allowed to be decisive of two points, viz. the genuineness of the pamphlet in question, and the real sentiments of Dr. Watts, within three years of his death. Some of the abettors of the Doctor's orthodoxy have thought it right to deny the one, and the assertors of his heterodoxy have laboured under a misconception of the other. It is hoped, that, as the public are now in possession of the whole evidence of the case, the Doctor's friends will renounce their scepticism, and his enemies abate their triumph.

I have made these observations, not with the view of implicating myself in any particular theological speculations, but of placing, as far as lay in my power, an historical question on its true grounds.

I will just add, that the edition of Dr. Watts's pamphlet which was printed in 1802, is, so far as I have compared them, an exact reprint of the edition of 1745, with the exception of the "Extracts from the Author's other writings on the Trinity," which, of course, were not appended to the original edition.—

Yours, respectfully,

A. CREAK.